Week ending Dec. 26 1959

JOHN BULL

Everybody's Weekly

EVERY WEDNESDAY 5d

WHAT WAS THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM?

by PATRICK MOORE

The spine-chilling romance
TOO MANY GHOSTS
by PAUL GALLICO

A great new
RAFFLES
adventure

IN
THESE
FORTHCOMING
ISSUES
ON SALE

DECEMBER 30

JANUARY 13

FEBRUARY 3

FEBRUARY 24

JOHN BULL

WILL PRESENT FOR YOUR GUIDANCE ONE OF THE BEST DISPLAYS OF

HOLIDAY ADVERTISING

OFFERED BY ANY MAGAZINE

Every year at this time, holiday advertisers at home and abroad use JOHN BULL to make known their next season's plans. It is one of the most comprehensive series of holiday advertisements to be found in any magazine—and it has been appearing in JOHN BULL for many years.

This is a great opportunity to plan your holiday early. All these advertisers want JOHN BULL readers as their customers. And we, in turn, take care to ensure that they are sound and reliable companies.

Their business is to help give you a good time, so give them your consideration.

It is our business also to see that you get the best service. If there is any way in which we can help please let us know.

THE ADVERTISEMENT DEPARTMENT
OF JOHN BULL IS ALWAYS
AT YOUR SERVICE
—96-98 Long Acre, London, W.C.2

GRAND Christmas and New Year Film Competition

1

ONE BY ONE THEY FALL

John Dillinger!

Pretty Boy Floyd!

Machine Gun Kelly!

Ma Barker!

Baby Face Nelson!

THE FBI STORY TECHNICOLOR®

Starring JAMES STEWART

VERA MILES from WARNER BROS. A MERVYN LeROY Production

RELEASED THROUGH WARNER-PATHE DISTRIBUTORS LTD.

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ON these pages are four advertisements numbered 1-4. Study them carefully. Now select from the list of eighteen lettered phrases below *that* phrase which best fits Advertisement No. 1 in £50 FREE coupon on opposite page. Continue similarly with the other THREE advertisements: find for each the phrase from list which fits it best and fill in on coupon the key letter of that phrase.

COMPLETE YOUR COUPON AS INSTRUCTED UPON IT

A. You know just what to expect when you go to see . . .
B. Want inspiration? . . . is the film for you.
C. Consider . . . when taking the family to the movies.
D. Can't be beaten for good entertainment.
E. Darkness, it seems, can be most revealing.
F. Study this advertisement closely—there's lots to see.
G. Could be you know these characters. They come to life in . . .
H. See . . . and it will undoubtedly make you talk.
I. Clearly there's trouble brewing for someone.
J. What a catch and no way out!
K. Look! Something going off with a bang?
L. So obviously well suited for family filmgoing.
M. His name suggests solid entertainment.
N. Gales are forecast, so they're all aboard.
O. This killer is pretty sure to grip you.
P. Sit back and enjoy . . . —there shouldn't be a dull moment.
Q. A couple of cards are likely to give a good deal of fun.
R. This close-up shows what you can expect.

Don't take your family

£50 *Free* Cash Prize MUST BE WON

2

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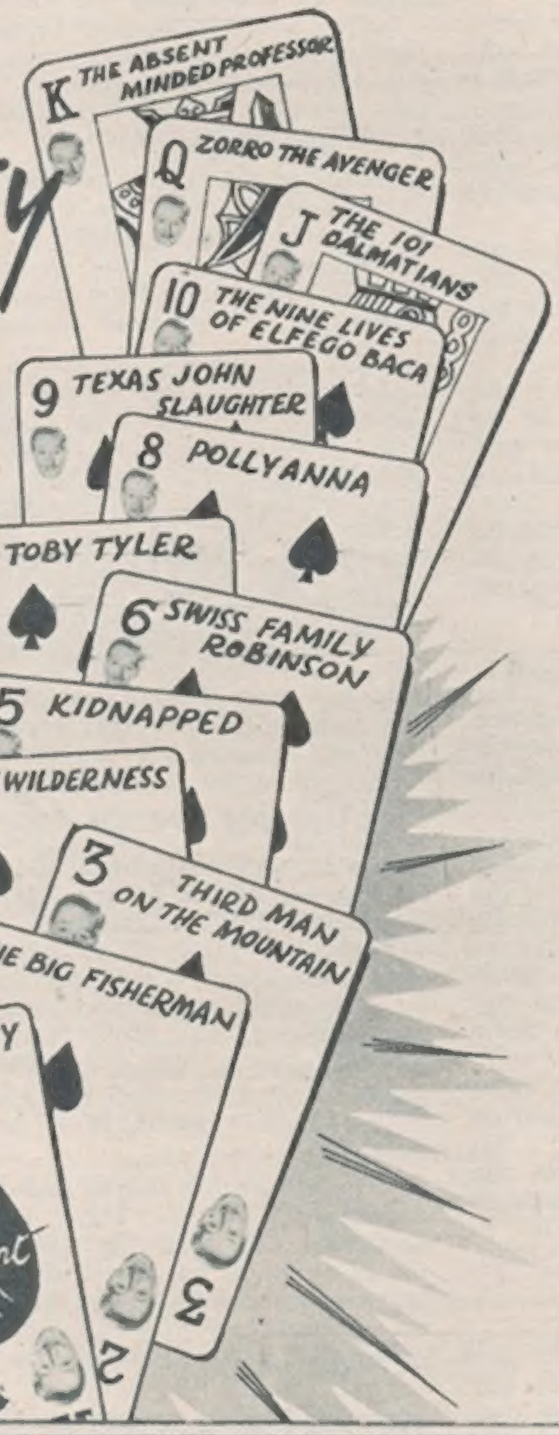
WALT DISNEY holds all the trumps!



Entry Form

FILL IN THIS FREE COUPON

FILL in four key letters for four Film Advts.—see opposite page. Add your name and full address. Post in sealed envelope not later than January 12th to **FILM-ADS, "John Bull," 96 Long Acre, London, W.C.99.** For coupon bearing (in ink or ball-point) the most skilful and appropriate fitting of phrases to advertisements, as decided by panel of advertising experts, £50 cash will be awarded. Ties divide. No entry fee. Signature on coupon binds applicant to accept published result as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees ineligible. Result in earliest possible issue of "John Bull."

1	
2	
3	
4	

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Signature.....

Address.....

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CUT HERE *J.F.A. Dec. 26*

3

HERBERT WILCOX presents

CECIL PARKER · RONALD SHINER LESLIE PHILLIPS

THE NAVY LARK "U"

"Will fill home-town cinemas with gales of laughter" —NEWS OF THE WORLD

ELVI HALE NICHOLAS PHIPPS · HAROLD KASKET
CARDEW ROBINSON · HATTIE JACQUES · GORDON JACKSON

Directed by **GORDON PARRY**

Screenplay by SID COLIN and LAURIE WYMAN based on the B.B.C. radio series of the same name written by LAURIE WYMAN

A WILCOX-NEAGLE
CINEMASCOPE
Production Released by 20th Century-Fox

GREAT HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT NOW ON RELEASE

4

EVERYONE WILL BE TALKING

"PILLOW TALK" *SOON!*

CO STARRING
TONY RANDALL · THELMA RITTER
with NICK ADAMS · MARCEL DALIO · JULIA MEADE

CINEMASCOPE IN EASTMAN COLOUR

Directed by MICHAEL GORDON · Screenplay by STANLEY SHAPIRO and MAURICE RICHLIN
Produced by ROSS HUNTER and MARTIN MELCHER
A RANWIN PRODUCTION Released by UNIVERSAL INTERNATIONAL through RANK FILM DISTRIBUTORS LTD

Doris Sings! Rock Sings! Your Heart Sings!
"PILLOW TALK"
"POSSESS ME"
"ROLY POLY"
"INSPIRATION"

for granted- take them out to the "pictures"

JOHN BULL
EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY
189 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.1
CHANCERY 3344 DEC. 26, 1959
VOLUME 106 NUMBER 2784

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The Cover

Now *that's* a coincidence. When he asked his sons what they wanted from Father Christmas, it turned out to be just what Father Christmas wanted, too, and naturally he must see that all is in working order. More fun is in store: as yet untested among those intriguing parcels are a chemistry set and an atomic long-range cannon. A father of daughters, artist Zelinski misses such delights. "What joy can a man find," he reflects sadly, "in toy saucepans and a night-dress case?"

Free Speech

JOHN BULL: EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post and in our feature "We Advise."

When Home Is Best

BOTH my sons have been very bright—and when the first won a scholarship to a boarding school I refused to let him go because I always maintained that parents who sent their children away for a large part of the year were sadly neglecting their duties.

However, our second son also got a boarding-school scholarship and my wife persuaded me to let him go. It's at holiday times that I realize what a wise move this was.

Our eldest boy, who lived at home all the year, always wanted to go away with his own friends. We used to argue about whether he should stay with the family. He thought home was dull. But to my younger son home is best. Now our holidays are occasions for happy family reunions. —JOHN T. CONNELL, Bradford.

Young Eyes In Trouble

I have met two schoolchildren recently who were only scraping through in their classwork because they were extremely shortsighted.

One, a boy, is attending a grammar school. His work has been steadily deteriorating and he has been hopeless at games—yet until recently nobody detected that he couldn't see well. The other was a girl. Again it was her mother who found out that she couldn't see what was being written on the blackboard.

I cannot understand why poor eyesight is not detected during school medical examinations. An optician's receptionist has told me that shortsightedness in children is not taken very seriously. This is surely a mistaken view.—MRS. GLADYS GUNNING, Bristol.

Acid Home Test

When my wife and I bought our first house we blithely took the words of estate agent and owner at face value. It wasn't long before disadvantages became apparent. We hadn't been told any lies—but the snags were carefully omitted.

For instance, the agent took us from town by car—at the weekend. The neighbourhood was quiet and pleasant. When we took up residence we discovered that the bus service was terrible, and we were in earshot of a busy sawmill—which shut down at weekends.

Three houses and several years later, we have now developed our own house-buying technique. After visiting with the agent we always go back by public transport.

We make some excuse to call at the people next door. In a casual conversation with them many unsuspected snags come out.

We've even discovered a way to encourage realism in the estate agent. Express interest in a dearer property and it's amazing how quickly he starts pointing out the disadvantages of the smaller house. —A. M. HARDCASTLE, Bristol.

Motorway Robots

Some time ago in Essex a garage proprietor built a dummy petrol attendant complete with white coat outside his premises. I think it was electronically controlled and passing cars caused the dummy to raise his arm in a salute.

This principle could be copied on the M1 motorway. Cars on that road could make a red light glow appear on posts along the route.

In fog and bad weather following cars would be warned of the distance between them and the next car.—MRS. F. C. MANSER, Foxhall Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

"Road safety experts are watching experiments on this line which are being carried out in America," says a transport expert. "The idea is to have impulses sent from electronic equipment in the road flashing a

light in the car if there's another car just ahead. These are very expensive ideas and installed at great cost."

Health For Danes

A reader suggested a medical check-up for all adults ("Free Speech," November 28). In Denmark most workers are required to have an annual medical and it is quite usual for employers to demand a certificate showing that prospective employees have had a medical examination in the previous year.—MRS. M. SOWERSBY, West Street, Southend, Essex.

"This medical is left to individual employers," says the Danish Embassy. "However, to check TB the government has just had a campaign to have everyone in the country examined. It's not compulsory —but most people have it done."

Reverse Procedure

Our Highway Code is incomplete in that it does not tell me how I can signal to reverse. Lack of this signal causes delays, bottlenecks and jams.

Just one example is the motorist who fails to complete a right-hand turn because his full steering lock will not take him past an obstacle; he needs room to shunt back a few yards, but a following motorist parks close behind him.

He, of course, reverses cheerfully enough when asked—but a hand signal or official reversing light would make this unnecessary.—K. A. CROSS, Scarsdale Villas, Kensington, London, W.8.

Men From Prison

In your article "It's cost you £10,000 to keep me in prison" (JOHN BULL, November 14) Harold Holt recounts his experiences at the National Assistance Board's local office in Blackpool, where he says he was told that nothing could be done for him because he had no fixed abode.

He goes on to say he was given 5s. when he called at the office and told he would be given further help when he had got himself a room.

This is contradicted by our records which show that Mr. Holt was given considerably more financial help by the board than he suggests.

A man leaving prison is given a special form of introduction to the board's local office and if he thinks he can fix himself up with a room he will be given cash to cover a reasonable rent and to buy food, etc. If he can't find a room he will be given a voucher for accommodation in a lodging house or hostel.

Assistance is not refused simply because a person has no fixed address.—F. D. BICKERTON, National Assistance Board, London, E.C.4.

The Ideal Gift

I wonder if any readers have experienced the kind of thrill my husband and I had on a visit to Saskatoon in Canada recently.

I had filled up the usual form for a yearly subscription to JOHN BULL for my foster daughter and her husband, so during our three months in Canada you can imagine how delighted we were to read your magazine again. It was like a breath of home.—Mrs. E. EGGINTON, Lime Tree Avenue, Coventry, Warwicks.

A year's subscription to JOHN BULL *is the perfect all-the-year-round gift. For full details write now to Subscriptions,* JOHN BULL: EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY, 57 Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

Misplaced Chimneys

I have noticed that in Alpine countries where winters are usually severe, the main fireplace or stove is more or less in the centre of the house so that the heat, rising through the chimney inside the building, also gets to the upper floors.

These houses are much easier to keep warm and I wonder why in this country the house chimney is almost invariably at an outside wall. —MRS. E. POOLE, Victoria Avenue, Peacehaven, Sussex.

. . . My garage is one of the warmest places in my house because it gets heat from my sitting-room chimney.

But how much better it would be if the chimney heated the hall and landing.—D. W., Coulsdon, Surrey.

Greek Royal Tragedy

Like the Duchess of Kent I, too, was born and brought up in Greece and young as I was I recall one incident which linked me in a roundabout way with a tragedy in the Greek royal family.

My father, as Moderator of the Greek Protestant Church in Salonika, had met King George on several occasions. On March 13, 1913, he and I were out for a walk when King George came along with his A.D.C. He stopped to talk to us—and smiling graciously took the flower from his buttonhole, gave it to me and patted me on the head.

Shortly afterwards he was shot by a maniac. We presumed we were the last people he spoke to. The flower is still preserved in my mother's Bible. — MRS. KAY BUCHANAN, Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

Why Women Buy

There is usually only one reason why a man buys something, but with a woman it might be eight:

Because her husband says she can't have it; it will make her look thin; it comes from Paris; her neighbours can't afford it; nobody has one; everybody has one; it's different; because. — GEORGE J. CURRIE, Knox Place, Aberdeen.

An intriguing new mystery by BARRY PEROWNE

RAFFLES and Little Bo-Peep

WHAT had started as a friendly hour or so of poker had turned into an all night session. Daylight was showing round the edges of the curtains when A. J. Raffles and I, Bunny Manders, rose at last from the table. I felt a ruin, both physically and financially, but Raffles looked as fresh and alert as ever. Nobody would have guessed that he, too, had lost a great deal more than he could afford.

"Thanks for the game, Derek," he said.

"Not going, surely?" said our bachelor host, Derek Fenn. "Have a bite of breakfast first. How about a dish of grilled kidneys?"

I winced at the thought. My head was splitting. But Derek Fenn could afford to be hearty. A large, likeable, sandy-haired young man, he was born lucky. He had made a pot of money staging West End plays. Everything he touched turned to gold. It was he who had just skinned us all at poker.

"No thanks, Derek," Raffles said firmly.

"Well, if you insist." Derek hunted up our capes and opera hats and opened the front door

No sooner had Kate knocked than the door opened and a fellow with a revolver told her to step inside—quick

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

Raffles and Little Bo-Peep

continued from previous page

to a broadening daylight that made my eyes feel tender.

Fenn's house was in a London suburb. The sun came up as Raffles and I, heading for the station, walked along one peaceful, pleasant street after another.

"It's a treat to be out of doors, Bunny," Raffles said. "Damned silly way to spend a——" He gripped my arm. "Listen!"

For a moment all I could hear was the whistle and chirp of the birds in the gardens. Then I heard a woman was singing, quietly yet clearly:

Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And doesn't know where to find them. . . .

The voice stopped. We hurried forward to a corner. The street turning off bore the name: Raynescourt Avenue.

The street was empty except for a solitary, slender figure strolling along in the middle of the road. The stroller carried a small suitcase. Her hair shone amber in the sunlight. She was glancing up at the windows on either side and, as she wandered along slowly towards us, she began to sing again:

Leave them alone and they'll come home,
And bring their tails behind them.

Then she spotted us and her song broke off sharply. She moved quickly to her left, on to the pavement away from us. Clearly she wished to avoid us, and I was embarrassed when Raffles went straight across the road to her, raising his hat.

"Forgive me," he said, "but I can't resist thanking you for adding an enchanting touch to an enchanted hour."

I saw the girl's colour heighten, but she smiled. At this I plucked up the courage to walk across and, raising my own hat, say: "May I venture to couple my thanks with my friend's?"

She seemed confused for a second. Then she gave a little laugh and said: "I hardly know whether to pass the hat round now, or explain my real reason for singing. Absurd as it may sound, I really *have* lost my sheep!"

I gaped at her. But Raffles, in his easy way, said: "If we can be of any help, please look upon my friend Manders and me—my name is Raffles—as obedient sheepdogs."

"I believe you really mean it," she said. "My name's Kate Dover. Thank you for your offer, but I'm afraid you can't help me. My only trouble is that my mother and my little girl are living in this street and I just don't know which house."

"How very tantalizing for you!" Raffles exclaimed.

"Isn't it?" said Kate Dover fervently. "Especially as I haven't seen them for eight whole months. I've been abroad, touring with a repertory company. I left my mother and Drusilla—she is six—living in rooms in London. Just before I sailed for home, my mother wrote to say that they had moved into new rooms in the suburbs. She gave me the new address, but I stupidly lost it. I remember the road as Raynescourt Avenue, but for the life of me I can't remember the number."

She glanced despairingly along the vacant, tranquil street. "We docked at Tilbury in the middle of the night and I rushed straight out here on the first workmen's train. When the sun came up I knew Drusilla would be awake. She always wakes early. You know how children are."

"Certainly," said Raffles.

KATE DOVER said: "The thought that she was behind one of these blankly shining windows, probably sitting up in bed playing with her dolls, drove me crazy. So I thought I'd walk the street singing her favourite nursery rhyme. I knew she'd recognize my voice and I hoped she would look out of the window and call to me."

"Excellent idea," Raffles said. "It deserves to have paid a dividend. As it hasn't, Bunny, you take one side of the street, I'll take the other. We'll knock 'em all up and ask if they have a Mrs.—Mrs.—?"

"My mother's name is Belman," said Kate Dover. "But I can't possibly let you do this. My mother would be horrified if I were to knock up the whole street at sunrise, in company with two strange men in evening dress."

"I see your point," Raffles admitted. "But what d'you propose to do then?"

"I must just be patient, that's all," said Kate Dover. "I'll sit on that seat along there until the postman comes. He'll be able to help me."

She was so insistent that we could do nothing except escort her to the seat which was opposite No. 53 and leave her there.

"I don't like leaving her with her predicament unresolved, Bunny," Raffles said as we walked on.

We looked back from the end of Raynescourt Avenue. Kate Dover sat alone on the seat opposite No. 53—the house with the red creeper.

THE following Saturday morning, I walked round to Albany to call on Raffles.

"I've been expecting you round before this, Bunny," he said. "Didn't you see Wednesday's newspapers, with the story of the attack on Kate Dover."

"Attack?" I said incredulously.

"Just so," said Raffles. His keen, tanned face was grim. "Bunny, I'll never forgive myself for the way we walked off and left her. I had a queer feeling at the time that we were wrong.

"We left her on that seat, remember? Soon after, it seems she saw one of the lace curtains move in a downstairs window of the house opposite."

"Number fifty-three," I said. "The house with the red creeper."

"Creeper's right," Raffles said. "Kate, seeing someone was up and about, decided to go across and ask if they could help her. She knocked and a fellow with a mask and a revolver told her to step in—quick.

"He marched her into the drawing-room, tied her up in a chair, stuck a gag in her mouth. He was waiting to ambush the postman."

"The postman?" I said blankly.

"With Kate helpless in the chair," Raffles said, "the fellow stood peering out through the lace curtains. After a long wait, the postman called. The fellow had *him* in, too, in a flash. He tied and gagged him in a chair alongside Kate, took two or three registered postal packets, and was gone like the morning dew."

Raffles took a Sullivan from his cigarette-case.

"Pretty neat, Bunny," he said. "The people who live at number fifty-three were away. The fellow must have posted a letter there to make sure the postman would call, then broke in during the night to wait for him."

"What in the world must the fellow have thought," I said, "when he heard that voice singing *Bo-Peep?*"

"It must have made his skin crawl, Bunny," Raffles said. "And then you and I appeared and talked to Kate and went away, leaving her settled on that seat exactly opposite. She couldn't fail to see what happened when the postman arrived. He must have been at his wit's end what to do about her—when she played right into his hands by coming across and knocking."

"Is she all right?" I said.

"Fortunately, yes," said Raffles. "In the newspaper story she was described as 'Kate Dover, aged twenty-six, of number thirty-four Raynescourt Avenue.' The police found and released her and the postman a few hours later. As soon as I read the story, I called at number thirty-four to ask Kate if there was anything we could do for her. She said there wasn't, but I'm not so sure."

"What do you mean?" I said.

"They're a delightful family, Bunny," Raffles said. "Kate's husband was a young actor who died four years ago. Kate's now the breadwinner, and that's why she's away so much—she has to take any tour she can get. But she's out of a job—and worried. Kate's never had a real chance in her profession, and she deserves one, and you and I are going to see that she gets it. We're going to put money into Derek Fenn's next West End show and make sure Kate gets a good part in it."

"Where are we going to get the money?" I said wryly.

"From a man called Leo Pardick, of number seventy Raynescourt Avenue," said A. J. Raffles.

"The police," he went on, "are convinced that the fellow Kate encountered was one of a gang specializing in mail robberies. But I've been working along a slightly different line."

Vivacity danced in his eyes.

"I learned that Raynescourt Avenue is the last lap of that postman's route. So between number fifty-three, where the ambush was set, and number seventy-two, the last house in the street, the postman had only nineteen houses left to call at.

"Granted that the site of the ambush was dictated by the fact that number fifty-three happened to be the house where the people were away, what were the chances that there'd be enough left in the postman's bag, that far on his round, to make the job worth while? Pretty slender, it seemed to me. Unless the ambusher had information that some specific registered postal packet—one he wanted—was in transit to an address in Raynescourt Avenue *between* fifty-three and seventy-two."

HE paused, then continued: "I looked up the local street directory, with special reference to those last nineteen houses. There was a name that rang a faint bell for me—Pardick, tenant of number seventy. I felt sure I'd heard Ivor Kern mention the name. So I went to see him."

I was instantly alert. Our old friend Ivor, antique dealer and "fence," was a mine of information on criminals.

"He knew the name?" I said eagerly.

"He did," said Raffles. "He once 'fenced' some stolen jewellery for a man called Pardick whose line was working as a commercial traveller and pulling off jobs on his travels. I took Ivor out to Raynescourt Avenue and we contrived to get a glimpse of Pardick of number seventy." He paused. "He was not the same man, but he was so much like him that Ivor's certain he must be the other Pardick's brother.

"You see what that suggested? As you know, the safest way to send small articles of high value from one place

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"You and I, Bunny," Raffles said, "are going to see that Kate gets a chance"

On this Christmas Day...

Behind the royal broadcasts lie weeks of work—by a crack team who will beat any crisis

ON Christmas morning last year, John Harvey, son of the licensee of the Woolpack, King's Lynn, was walking in the market place when he noticed a briefcase leaning against a wall. Inside was a script, with timings scribbled in the margin, of the Christmas message the Queen was to deliver on television that afternoon.

Harvey knew exactly what to do. The briefcase belonged to Antony Craxton, school friend of the Duke of Edinburgh and a B.B.C. producer. Harvey took it without delay to the police, who rushed the script out to Craxton at nearby Sandringham.

Until this year, when the Queen pre-recorded her Christmas message, the innkeepers of King's Lynn have been used to giving what help they could, in all sorts of crises, to the B.B.C. engineers and producers who flocked to their town at Christmas for the royal broadcast.

"We miss them," said Edgar Gerhardt, of the Globe. "Our night porter had more early calls on a Christmas morning than on any other day of the year. Television made a big difference. We had a team of forty or more in the district."

Rehearsals with Philip

This year's pre-recording was more like the old days. Only a small unit was required to record the Queen's message—the twenty-sixth in the series. One of the team was Robert Wood, an engineer closely associated with royal broadcasts since 1935.

Nowadays, however, such a session is a brief, efficient affair. The Queen rehearses privately beforehand with the Duke of Edinburgh, using his tape recorder.

And there were no hazards of transmission to worry about. When sound broadcasting from Sandringham began at Christmas, 1932, Eddie Woods, of the B.B.C. Lines Department, had to go to Norfolk almost three months ahead, to look things over. With Sid Brown of the Post Office he made a thorough check of the overhead lines.

Queen Mary, always a stickler for having things just so, wanted to know exactly how King George V's first broadcast would be taken from her home in Norfolk to the world.

The "A" line, Woods explained, ran from Hunstanton to King's Lynn, using the railway signal lines. Then the "A" line and two reserve lines branched away, the "A" line through Norwich to join the Anglo-Dutch cable where it came from the North Sea, and so on to London.

"So," said Queen Mary, putting her finger unerringly on the one unavoidable weak spot, "any carelessly-driven lorry hitting a telegraph pole near King's Lynn could wreck the broadcast."

This was so, but it never happened.

"God bless my soul"

The first royal Christmas broadcast, however, almost had an unconventional opening. As King George V seated himself at his desk, he went through the cane seat of his chair, with the exclamation, "God bless my soul."

His study had been wired to take two microphones (there never was a golden one, despite the legend) and the pages' room, next door, became the control room. Lights had been fixed to flash signals between the two rooms to start the broadcast, but George V strongly disliked them. He much preferred, he said, to have the B.B.C.'s Seymour Joly de Lotbinière pop his head round the door and signal the start with his finger.

From 1932 onwards, the personal message from the monarch became a Christmas tradition which was broken only in 1936, the year of the abdication, and in 1938, when it was decided that the broadcast was too great an ordeal for George VI, because of his speech impediment.

Only George VI's determination kept the tradition going. On the morning of his first broadcast, in 1937, while he was rehearsing, he told Eddie Woods that he wanted the lines to London disconnected. There was to be no pre-recording of the speech as a safety measure. "I want my people," the King said, "to hear *my* voice, not what you think should be my voice."

The risk was considerable. Before the King had become a patient of Lionel Logue, a breezy

continued on page 19

by LESLIE BREWER

WAS IT HALLEY'S COMET? We know that it shot across the heavens at the time Christ was born. Last seen in 1910, it is due to reappear in 1986

PATRICK MOORE, *television's astronomer, brings the most modern scientific knowledge to bear on a centuries-old mystery . . .*

What was the STAR

DURING the past few months, the planet Venus has been a striking object in the eastern sky before dawn. Shining down so brilliantly that it looks almost like a small lamp in the sky, it cannot fail to attract attention, and many people have written to me asking "What is it? Can it be the same object which the Bible calls the Star of Bethlehem?"

Now that Christmas is here it is certainly worth while to look into this fascinating puzzle as closely as we can. Yet we must be frank with ourselves; we cannot hope to find a definite answer, and it is by no means certain that science can provide an answer of any kind. If the star were a miracle, scientists can say nothing which will help to clear the matter up. If, on the other hand, we can show that some unusual event—astronomically speaking—occurred at about the critical moment, we may be able to make some suggestions as to the real nature of the star; so let us examine the various theories which have been put forward from time to time.

What the Bible says

The star is mentioned only once in the Bible; in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, 2. Matthew tells us that the wise men from the East came to Herod, saying "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Verses 7 to 10 run as follows:

"Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."

St. Matthew says no more; the other Gospels do not mention the star at all, and so from the very beginning our information is decidedly scanty. To make matters worse, we are by no means sure about our dates. The one thing we do know for certain is that Christ was not born on December 25, A.D. 1. Our "A.D." dates are reckoned according to the calculations of a Roman monk, Dionysius Exiguus, who died in the year 556. He computed the date of Christ's birth to be 754 years later than the founding of Rome, and the system has become so firmly established that it will never be altered now, even though it is almost definitely wrong; Christ was actually born several years earlier than Dionysius Exiguus imagined. Moreover, December 25 was not celebrated as Christmas Day until the fourth century; by which time the real date had been forgotten, so that our Christmas is wrong too.

It is most unlikely that this particular problem will ever be cleared up. The only hope would be the discovery of some vital document, but the chances seem remarkably slender, and we must make do with the fragmentary evidence which we already have.

As far as superficial appearance is concerned, Venus would fit our requirements quite well. It can be a magnificent object—as, indeed it is at the moment—and it is always best seen either in the west after sunset or in the east before dawn. Consequently, it must have been a brilliant morning star reasonably often during the period which covers the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem. Unfortunately for this idea, we can show straight away that the star was not Venus or any other planet. Two thousand years ago, the appearances and apparent motions of the celestial bodies were already well known; and if the star had been

WAS IT A METEOR? Patrick Moore believes the Holy Star may have been two meteors, like this one seen above South Africa. It took a two-hour exposure to photograph the stars, but the much brighter meteor needed only a second

WAS IT A NOVA? This is a violent explosion of light round a star, which glows for several days. The Holy Star may have looked like this supernova of 1901. It was seen for more than three months

OF BETHLEHEM?

Venus, everybody would have known about it—indeed, Herod himself would have had to do no more than go and look.

This may seem a simple argument, but it is certainly a powerful one. Herod was "troubled," to use Matthew's term, because the star was unusual, and so could not be explained away.

The same reasoning disposes of the idea that the planet Jupiter can have been responsible.

Was it two planets?

Over a hundred years ago, an interesting theory was put forward by a German scientist, C. L. Ideler. Ideler calculated the positions of the planets at the period, and found that in the year 7 B.C. Jupiter and Saturn were close together, with Mars not far off. Confining ourselves to the first two planets for the moment, we must agree that on rare occasions it is possible for Jupiter and Saturn to lie so close together in the sky that they appear as one object—at least to the unaided eye.

It is true that if put together, Jupiter and Saturn would make a brave show in the sky—but Ideler's calculations were wrong. The whole situation was re-examined in 1856 by the Rev. Charles Pritchard, who found that in 7 B.C. the two planets were never sufficiently close in the sky to be mistaken for one object; neither do their positions agree with that of the star according to the wise men. The idea is ingenious, but we must definitely reject it.

Our sun is an ordinary star, and—fortunately for us—it shines steadily; its total output of energy has not altered much over the past million years at least. Most of the other stars are similarly well behaved. Now and then, however, we are able to watch a real stellar outburst, when a formerly very faint star suffers some kind of internal disturbance and brightens up suddenly, becoming extremely brilliant for a few days or weeks before fading back into obscurity. These "novæ," as they are termed, cannot be predicted, but are not particularly unusual; among those which have been seen during the present century were the novæ of 1901, 1918 and 1934. More spectacular still are the even more violent "supernovæ," in which the star concerned blows much of its material away into space. In recorded times, three supernovæ have been seen in our own star-system—those of 1054, 1572 and 1604, all of which became bright enough to be seen with the unaided eye in full daylight. It has been suggested that the Star of Bethlehem may have been another.

For almost two thousand years this is how men have depicted the Star of Bethlehem—as a divine signpost sent to guide the Wise Men to Jerusalem. Now astronomy may have explained the miracle

Miracle in the East

This is certainly the best idea yet. The ancient astronomers could have had no idea of the nature of a supernova, and would have been quite likely to have classed any such thing as a miracle; moreover, the object would have remained visible only for a limited period, which would account for the fact that it was never mentioned again. It could easily have made its appearance in the eastern part of the evening sky, and it would most certainly have taken everybody by surprise.

On the other hand, we are still faced with the difficulty that astronomical records say nothing about a nova or supernova during the years immediately before Christ's birth; and although the records are admittedly incomplete, one would have expected to have found a reference somewhere or other. In addition, Matthew makes it clear that the star was first seen by the wise men before their interview with Herod, and was again seen afterwards. Novæ do not brighten and fade in such a way. If the star were of such a nature, it

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PAUL GALLICO'S latest romantic thriller TOO MANY GHOSTS

DEATH MUSIC in the NIGHT

They had seen the phantom nun and heard her eerie music. Did it mean that another Paradine must die?

ONE thing was already clear to Alexander Hero: Susan Marshall, the lovely young American guest, was at the storm centre of the terrible happenings at Paradine Hall. Something or someone was trying to drive her away. . . .

Hero had been hired to investigate certain apparently supernatural events: furnishings hurling themselves down in Isobel Paradine's room; mischievous poltergeist tricks annoying the Paradine Country Club guests. More serious —the appearance of the Paradine nun, laying icy fingers on Susan Marshall's throat; a harp playing by itself. Legend said that the nun and the harp meant disaster for the Paradines.

And this was not all. Candles flickered out during dinner, and in the darkness a strangled rabbit materialized on Susan Marshall's plate.

Now Hero was at work, briefed on the social background of the Paradines by his stepsister Meg, a society photographer. At once he spotted the interest shown in Susan by Sir Richard Lockerie, a family friend, and by young Mark Paradine.

Then the new alarm was given. Susan's room had been devastated. To Hero's surprise, Beth Paradine, Mark's sister, burst into tears. "The harp has played," she cried, "and the nun was seen. Oh Susan, dear, I'm so frightened—I don't want anything to happen to you!"

Hero looked at Beth. He had heard a strange note in her voice. *Now that's odd,* he told himself. *Do you or don't you?*

Isobel watched as Hero examined the harp. He could find nothing abnormal about it — yet it had played by itself in a locked room

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

PART THREE

LADY PARADINE spoke up sharply. "Don't be ridiculous, Beth," she said. "Susan Marshall isn't a Paradine."

Mark Paradine made as though to speak, but then said nothing.

"Maybe the jolly old curse works for anybody on the premises," Cousin Freddie said.

Hero asked: "Is that true about the harp and the nun?"

Isobel replied in a voice that was hardly audible: "Yes, I'm afraid so. We have all heard it. It is a bad omen—it always has been." Then, more loudly, she said: "Susan, my dear, we'll change your room at once. We'll put you in the Restoration room—there's a lovely view of the river from it."

The American girl's handsome head came up in a movement of pride. "Thank you," she said, "but it won't be necessary. I shall stay here. I'm not afraid."

"Oh, good girl!" said Hero. "I suggest that this room is tidied up, and that, as she suggests, Miss Marshall remains here."

"After what has happened!" cried Mark. "Are you mad, sir?"

"Appeasement doesn't work on any plane, you know," Hero said. "It doesn't do to give in either to mischievous ghosts—or people." Then he added with finality: "But I think I can reassure you that there will be no further manifestations in this room."

Sir Richard glanced round the chaotic bedroom. "Why?" he asked. "There have already been two—why not a third?"

Hero said: "Because I am here."

Lord Paradine looked at him sharply. "You're very sure of yourself, young man," he said.

Hero replied: "You always have to be in my business."

An hour later the room had been swept and tidied, and everything restored to its place. Susan was in the act of stowing away her clothing when Mark Paradine knocked at the open door, shouted: "Hoy! May I come in?" and did so.

"Oh, Mark, dear," Susan said. "Do be a lamb and go away until I've finished."

But Mark went over to her and laid his hand upon her arm. She had been about to hang away a Cheviot coat of electric blue.

"Don't put it away," Mark said, "you'll have to take it down again."

"Why, Mark—what on earth do you mean?"

"I mean that I'm not going to have you stop in this room any longer."

WITH careful deliberation, Susan hung the blue coat in the closet and said: "But, Mark, I'm not moving—I'm staying here."

Mark said: "Look, you've had two nasty experiences here already. The third time. . . ."

"There won't be any third time," Susan said gently. "Hero said so."

"But damn it all, Susan. . . ."

She raised her eyes levelly now and looked into his. "I'm not letting anyone or anything frighten me out of this room, Mark. I'll leave here if you want me to—for good, and I wouldn't come back—but as long as I'm here it will be in this room. Do you want me to go?"

The young man groaned in exasperation. "For heaven's sake, Susan, be reasonable. Would I want you to leave when I'm so in love with you that I'd go out of my mind if something were to happen to you?"

"Then stop bullying me," Susan said, "and being so British. All you British bully your women, and they curtsy meekly and do what you tell them. Well, I don't."

Mark was angry now. "Oh no, you don't," he said, "not you. I noticed you jumped fast

Too many ghosts

continued from previous page

enough when Hero cracked the whip. And I suppose you'd jump for Sir Richard too."

Susan's eyes widened with astonishment and she said: "For Sir Richard? Why should I?"

Mark's voice rose. "Oh Susan, for God's sake! Don't you know that Sir Richard's in love with you? And I suppose now that chap Hero will come along and. . . ."

"Mark," Susan said, "you're shouting."

"Certainly I'm shouting," he shouted. "Why shouldn't I shout in my own house? You drive a man to shout. God only knows why I love you! Once and for all—will you leave this room?"

Susan replied: "No," but her voice was just a little smaller as she said it.

Mark Paradine turned and slammed out of the room. Susan stood holding her slip to her, looking at the door.

Why, she said to herself, *he really does love me! I wonder whether I could love him back . . . ?*

When Susan entered the library, Hero was browsing in a book. He said: "Hallo. How good of you to come."

It was curious, Susan thought, how she could not tell whether she liked him or not. Aloud, she said: "Huggins said you wanted me to take you about the house. I'm sure that he or one of the family could have done it better."

Hero said: "I don't doubt it. What I really wanted was to talk to you. Do you know of anyone here who might hate you?"

"I cannot think of anyone."

Hero nodded. "Then, do you know of anyone here who might be in love with you?"

Susan recoiled sharply. "That is a cruel question, and unfair," she cried.

Nothing about Hero's expression changed. Susan felt suddenly challenged as a woman, and thought, *I could break that composure—I'll bet I could.* And then she found excuses for him arising within her, and she said: "I'm sorry. I suppose it is neither your business nor your concern to be either fair or unfair." She then looked him unflinchingly in the eye and said: "Several."

HERO returned her gaze with just the faintest of smiles as he said: "I can understand that. All right, I shan't ask you anything further on the subject, but it is a beginning. Would it interest you to come about the house with me a bit, and see what there is to be seen?"

"Yes," said Susan definitely. "It would. Where shall we go first?"

"The music room, if you don't mind."

Susan said: "Oh yes, of course—the harp. I had forgotten that."

"Did you hear it play?"

"Y—yes, I think so, but I'm not sure. I woke up once one night and heard some music, but I thought it was someone playing a radio perhaps."

Hero nodded. "And then?"

"Then, in the morning, Beth told me the harp had been playing during the night. Isobel said it woke her and she got up and went down to see. Lord Paradine was there too but, when they went in, nobody was there."

The music room was one of those opening off the west corridor, on the north side, facing the river. It contained a grand piano, a metal music stand, and a number of shelves of music. There was a 'cello in a brown canvas case propped up in one corner. The harp stood over by the window.

Hero said: "Does anyone play it?"

Susan said: "I don't know. The room doesn't seem to have been used since I have been here."

Hero asked: "How long is that?"

Susan replied: "Four weeks. I've been asked to stay the summer."

Hero went over to the harp and ran a finger chromatically up the scale of strings; then he turned away from it. "Well, that seems to be that."

"Aren't you going to examine it?" Susan asked curiously.

Hero smiled at her. "For hidden radios or music boxes, you mean? That isn't how it played, if it did play."

"But it did," Susan insisted. "At least I'm sure now that I heard it."

Hero did not reply, but nodded in the manner of one whose mind was already on something else. "Is there a refrigerator?" he asked suddenly.

"Yes—I'll show you."

In the pantry, Hero looked over the huge refrigerator and whistled. And then he seemed to take no further interest in it, but instead examined other articles in the pantry minutely: the dish towels hung up to dry, the cupboards where glasses and dishes were stored, the soap and the soap dishes, the wire and cotton dish-washers, the bristle scrubbing brushes, and the pair of rubber gloves.

MORE astonishingly, he began to open pantry drawers in which were ranged kitchen utensils of every kind.

Huggins the butler came in, slightly shocked at this invasion.

In one drawer there was a nice arrangement of skewers. Hero stood looking down at these and then, selecting one, he examined it more closely. He took an envelope from his pocket, and dropped the skewer into it.

Hero addressed the butler. "I don't suppose any of the candles that were used in the dining room the night before last would be about, would they—the ones that went out?"

The butler replied: "No, sir."

Susan wondered how Hero knew, and thought that his next question would surely be: "Why not?" Instead, he merely said: "Never mind. We can always make more when we want them. Would you show me the fuse box, please?"

Huggins led the way to a small stone room where, upon the wall out of reach, was the master switch, and a great panel of fuses with a small, grimy printed card under each indicating the location that they controlled. Hero dragged over an old kitchen chair, stood on it, and examined the panel with that concentration that Susan found so fascinating.

"What are you looking for?" she asked. "What on earth have you been looking for all this time?"

"The stuff of ghosts," he replied curtly, and then added: "Later on I may ask you to be both patient and brave, and submit to a rather unpleasant little experiment, and we'll see if we can't stop some of this nonsense that's going on here." He climbed down from the chair and dusted his hands.

Susan said with slight indignation: "Do you enjoy being mysterious?"

Hero grinned at her and took her by the elbow. "Come into the garden, Maude," he said, and led her forth.

ALONE in his room next morning, Alexander Hero briefly reviewed the legend of the nun as recounted in Bruton's *Norfolk, Its Ghosts and Legends*.

The story, Hero noted, was typical of those ascribed to its era, the sixteenth century, when an incumbent Paradine supposedly had seduced a peasant girl betrothed to a local bumpkin. Afterwards, when she had entered a convent—St. Relinda's, at Wytrim

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IN SHORT

Great Chap When You Know Him

No, it's Joe's utter, shining integrity. If he thinks somebody he meets is a criminally moronic little stinker, he's honest and decent enough to say what's really in his heart. . . .

. . . personally, I think Joe has a point—surely there are more important things in life than washing and shaving and changing your shirt. . . .

. . . Joe's poetry isn't *easy*, I'll certainly admit that. But then, what really significant and original work is . . . ?

. . . yes, I know Susan was just a bit startled at the time, but it's just Joe's way of making a woman feel that she's appreciated *as a woman*. . . .

. . . he might appear overbearing, I suppose, but really it's the burning sense of vocation he has. . . .

. . . well, I can only say *I* wasn't bored. After all, Zen Buddhism does take a bit of explaining and Joe knows so much about it. . . .

. . . what I'd like to know is, if the little fool was so delicate, why did he have to spend all the evening provoking Joe like that . . . ?

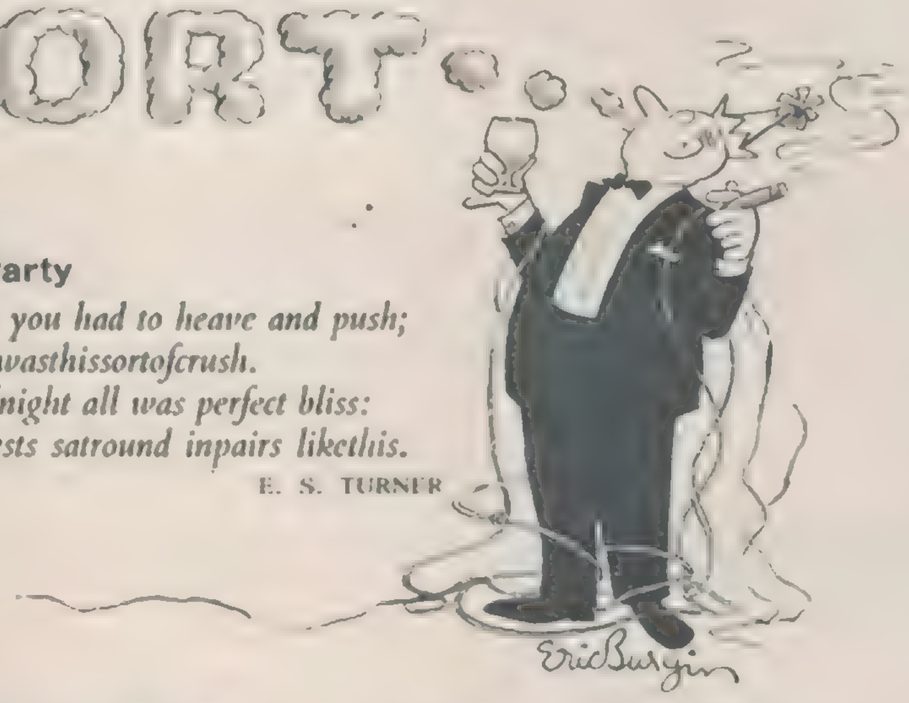
. . . oh, I know Joe has his faults, but don't you feel he has a sort of magnetic charm . . . ?

PATRICK GOLDRING

The Party

At first you had to heave and push;
Infactitwasthissortofcrush.
By midnight all was perfect bliss:
Theguests satround inpairs likethis.

E. S. TURNER



Destructional Toy

"The perfect do-it-himself constructional toy," proclaimed the box proudly. "No need to show Junior the ropes. Leave *him* to get on with the job." There were encouraging pictures, too, showing the good toddler doing quiet, constructional building things with a nest of coloured beakers.

So I gave it to the child, and he ate the box, tearing it into strips with his teeth. When he turned to the beakers themselves his ingenuity was boundless, his constructiveness nil.

There was, for instance, Developing Accurate Aim, or flinging the beakers at fragile objects—Mummy, the looking-glass or the new baby. There was Judging Heights, as in dropping them from a top-floor window and watching them bounce into a drain below. Getting to Know Own Strength involved bashing beakers on the floor, until either the people downstairs bashed back or the beakers broke. Growth of Musical Appreciation meant clashing them like cymbals. And Co-ordination of Hand and Devilish Brain—that was scooping up water from the bath and transferring it patiently to Daddy's shoes.

But I stuck to the rules and firmly refused to show him the ropes, telling myself every evening as I picked up beakers and savagely jammed them into one another that there was time to learn. Only not much. We are down to the last two; now, and supposing, just supposing, the vacuum cleaner could catch them unawares . . . there!

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

Playgoer's Guide

Play that is different. . . . *play without a butler.*
Deliciously funny. . . . *comedian loses trousers.*
Deliriously funny. . . . *comedian loses trousers twice.*
Slice of real life. . . . *deals with crooks, cranks, wrecks and trollops.*
Sheer escapism. . . . *play about nice people.*
Not for everybody. . . . *not for anybody.*
Full of delightful surprises. . . . *dog walks across stage.*
Daring new ballet. . . . *mime with flick-knives.*
Play that nags your conscience. . . . *play that spoils your nap.*
Rich emotional experience. . . . *hero socks heroine.*
Full of biting social comment. . . . *has jokes about Health Service.*
I must not give away the plot. . . . *I did not stay till the end.*

E. S. TURNER

Priority Present

The Christmas gift
Dad buys for Mum
Will cost him quite
A handsome sum;
But not as much
I'm bound to add
As that which Dad
Will buy for Dad.

A. KENNEDY

We've made it—the mechanical brain that's ALIVE!

by Dr. FRANK GEORGE

Dr. George and his wife Jacqueline inspect the brain's "memory"—made of chemically-treated threads. "It's as alive as I am," says George

It's startling, revolutionary . . . frightening. It will give orders, run factories and be the master of men

SOME time ago I was asked on the B.B.C. Brains Trust whether it was possible to build an electronic computer which was capable of doing everything of which the human brain was capable. I answered that I thought it was. It would be an extremely difficult task and costly in time and money, but there seemed no reason to doubt that it could be done.

Lady Violet Bonham Carter—also on the panel—was horrified at the idea. "Do you mean you could make it do everything that Winston's brain could do?" she asked me afterwards.

When I said that I thought we could—in time—she looked still more horrified and was obviously about to contradict me violently. Fortunately, Professor A. J. Ayer saved the situation. "But George would say that Winston Churchill's brain is electronic anyway," he said.

I often wonder what Lady Violet would think of our latest progress. For at Bristol University, Bernard Chapman and myself have now designed and built part of the first stage of a computer which could, we hope, be developed to do everything that a human brain would do.

It is made of the same basic type of chemical substance, and it works, we think, in the same fundamental way. It consists not only of metal valves and tubes but also of materials like organic tissues. In a sense, it lives. Technically, it is as alive as you or I.

Unlike the original electronic computers, as normally used, the living computer will not merely be the slave of human beings. It could be the master. It could tell human beings what to do.

It will, we hope, be able to run a whole factory. It will control the purchase of raw materials, supervise every stage of production, track down and remedy errors, cost the entire operation and work out an optimum level of production and prices in the light of changing world conditions. The only help it will need from humans will be a few slaves to feed it information and a few more to do menial maintenance jobs around the plant.

Moreover, it will be virtually infallible. It will make its decisions and give its orders in a fraction of the time it would take a human being. And the cost of operating it will be minute

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ONE OUT OF THE HAT

by CHARLES MATTHEWS

ILLUSTRATED BY ROSE

Somewhere in his top
was a never-ending supply of
white rabbits. S
get just one . . .

I WAS six years old when I stole something. Really stole something I mean: the sort of thing that brought the police around to your house if you were caught. I'm not counting old man Sansome's apple orchard or Joe Brown's strawberry beds. That's not proper stealing in any six-year-old boy's life, but a jolly exciting adventure. Old man Sansome had a bull-terrier and Joe Brown was pretty fast in spite of his bad leg. We learned a lot of new words from Joe, too. Mum heard me use one of them to my brother Roy one day when he smashed my kite—so Dad took his slipper to me.

No. What I stole was a hat . . . a man's hat. I was caught, too, but I didn't get into trouble except for the hiding Mum gave me over the brooch.

The man was called Marvello. He was a magician and when I stole his hat he was appearing in the Christmas show at the Tivoli, the old theatre in our town.

Dad was reading the paper one evening and said to Mum: "I think I'd like to see this chap Marvello. Haven't seen a magician since I was a kid. The boys have never seen one at all. I'll take them along to the matinée on Saturday."

"If they behave," said Mum, looking at us, me and my brother Roy.

We behaved all right. For three whole days we didn't do anything. No noise: well, not much anyway, no sliding down the stair rails, no whooping it up all over and through the garden, and coming straight in when Mum called us for meals. On Saturday Mum dressed me in my best suit and Dad took us, me and Roy, to the Tivoli. Mum couldn't go because of the baby.

It was a wonderful place with red and gold seats and a huge red curtain with gold fringes and gold tassels hanging in a big arch decorated with fat little pink boys with wings like angels and no clothes on except for some ribbons. I asked Dad if they were baby angels and he said, well, yes, he supposed so.

Then there was a lot of music from a band and the curtains opened and everybody clapped and Mr. Marvello walked on to the stage and took off his hat and bowed. He was dressed in a black suit with a white waistcoat and a white tie like the one Dad wears sometimes, but his overcoat was different from Dad's. It was very loose with no buttons and lined with red silk—Dad said it was an opera cloak. And he wore a tall, shiny black hat. If you pushed it on top it collapsed and got quite flat.

Mr. Marvello did all sorts of wonderful things and told funny stories and made everybody laugh and clap. He sawed a lady in half and put her together again and made things disappear and took them out of people's ears and pockets and did marvellous things with flags and cards.

I can't remember all the exciting and wonderful things he did, but the most exciting and wonderful thing of all was when he took the little white rabbits out of his shiny black hat.

HE held his hat up so that we could see that there was nothing inside and then he squeezed it flat and pushed it open again and put it upside down on the little black table with silver stars. Then he covered it with a bright yellow scarf and waved a shiny little stick over it and said: "Hey Presto!"

"What's the shiny little stick for, Dad?" I said, and Dad said: "It's a magic wand."

Then Mr. Marvello pulled away the bright yellow scarf and put his hand into the shiny black hat and pulled out a real live white rabbit just like I always wanted—with bright pink eyes and long white ears with pink inside. He put it down on the stage, where it hopped about and twitched its nose and washed its face with its paws.

Then Mr. Marvello put the yellow scarf back over the hat and waved his magic wand and said: "Hey Presto!" and out came another rabbit. He took nine white rabbits out of that wonderful hat one after the other and said: "You know what rabbits are like," and all the grown-ups laughed, including Dad.

And then he took three more white rabbits out of the hat and then a black one and said something about dirty work at the crossroads. The grown-ups all laughed again and Mr. Marvello bowed and smiled.

Soon the stage was covered with rabbits hopping about and I was feeling sick inside because I wanted one so much. . . .

AFTER the curtain came down, we went out to the entrance hall of the theatre. Dad said: "You boys wait here and don't move until I get back. I won't be a minute," and went off to get himself a drink. It was then that I stole the magician's hat.

Mr. Marvello came out of a door at the side and lots of children went up to him and held up little books which he wrote in with a fountain pen. He was very big, bigger than Dad, and dressed just like he was on the stage, except for his hat, which was flat in his hand.

When all the people came up to him, he put the hat on a small table right next to where me and Roy were standing Then he went around writing in the little books and shaking hands and talking and laughing with people. and pretty

While Mr. Marvello was wri
took his hat from the tabl

per

beautiful

urely I could

g in the little books, I

nd put it under my coat

STALLS

MARVEL

TO-DAY

One out of the hat

continued from previous page

soon he was right across the room with everybody around him.

And now me and Roy were all alone next to the table with the hat on it. Roy was looking at Mr. Marvello with his mouth open and I took the hat and pushed it under my coat, which was very loose.

I was jumping about with excitement when we got home and I rushed upstairs and hid the hat under my pillow. Afterwards, when Roy was somewhere else, I put the hat under my coat again and took it to my secret hiding-place in the tool-shed. Roy and I slept in the same room.

I couldn't go to sleep for a long time that night and Mum said: "Over-excitement," and gave me warm milk.

It was dark when I woke up and I waited until it was light and went down to the tool-shed without waking Roy. The hat was still there.

I pushed it open, put it upside down on Dad's work-bench and covered it with the pillow-case I had brought with me. I broke a small stick from the tree outside and waved it over the hat and said: "Hey Presto!" Then, with a funny feeling in my stomach, I pulled off the pillow-case and looked inside.

There was nothing there. Just nothing at all. Not even a silk handkerchief like the ones Mr. Marvello took out of the hat, or even one of those little flags, all colours and all tied together, which seemed to go on for ever.

I couldn't believe it. I tried it all over again, but it wasn't any good, so I put the hat back in the secret hiding place and went back to bed and cried.

After breakfast I knew what was wrong. Mr. Marvello had put a bright yellow scarf over the hat and his magic wand was all twinkling and shiny. Mum had a yellow silk scarf. I got it when Mum went out and I got Mum's brooch, too, the one with all the little shiny bits around the edges. I got the little shiny bits out of Mum's brooch and fixed them to my stick with the glue Dad kept in his desk. Then, while Roy was still away with the boy from next door, I went to the tool-shed, pushed Mr. Marvello's hat open and covered it with Mum's scarf and waved the stick with the shiny bits on it from Mum's brooch and said: "Hey Presto!" Then I took the scarf off slowly and looked inside.

Nothing. Nothing at all. I didn't cry. I just felt sick. I hid the hat away and went back to the house.

"I wonder if he's coming down with something," said Mum when I couldn't eat my lunch. She felt my forehead, said "Feverish," and put me to bed.

I didn't sleep for a long time that night and then I really *knew* what was wrong. You had to have everything. The hat and the yellow scarf and the magic wand—and the black table with silver stars, and the proper place.

Next day after breakfast (Mum had taken my temperature and said it must have been a false alarm) I walked to the Tivoli. It was a long walk and when I got there it was closed. I felt like crying again. I don't know what I would have done if it had been open and lots of people around, and I don't know why I thought it would be empty but open for me to get in.

I did get in though. At the back of the building there was a little window half open. A small boy could wriggle through. I wriggled through. And then I was on the stage and Mr. Marvello's table with silver stars was there and I put Mr. Marvello's hat upside down on the table and covered it with Mum's yellow scarf and waved my shiny stick over it and said: "Hey Presto!"

It was very quiet and I looked up and saw all the red and gold chairs sitting there like they were looking at me, and the huge red curtains with gold fringe and gold tassels folded back on each side and the blue ceiling as high as the sky over my head. And I knew, I just *knew* there was a lovely white rabbit inside the hat. . . .

"Good heavens—what's going on here?" a man said. "Early rehearsals or what?" And Mr. Marvello walked on to the stage. Only he wasn't dressed in his black suit and white waistcoat, but looked like Dad did when he went to his office.

I was too frightened to run away. I was too frightened even to cry.

"And what are you trying to do, young man?" said Mr. Marvello. "Steal my job?"

"No," I said, "I just want a rabbit."

"A rabbit!" said Mr. Marvello. "And what's under that yellow scarf?"

"Your hat," I said. "I took it on Saturday when we came to see you."

"So that's where it went," said Mr. Marvello. "Well. Well. And have you managed to get a rabbit out of it?"

"No," I said, "something keeps going wrong."

"Keeps going wrong?" said Mr. Marvello. "How do you mean keeps going wrong."

He didn't seem angry or anything, so I stopped being frightened and told him about my tries in the tool-shed, and about Mum's scarf and Mum's brooch and my climbing through the little window.

"And you're quite sure there's a rabbit in there now?" said he.

"Oh yes," I said. "There's got to be one this time. I did everything right just like you did."

"Well, we don't want anything to go wrong again," said Mr. Marvello. "It's very bad for the rabbits. All these interruptions to production . . . soon we'll be having no rabbits at all. Now just you wait here and don't touch that scarf. No peeping, understand? You'll frighten that rabbit away."

MR. MARVELLO went through a door at the back and I didn't peep at the rabbit in the hat.

When Mr. Marvello came back, he had on his red-lined cloak and he said: "You didn't touch anything? Good boy. Now just do it all over again in case you made any mistakes."

So I did it all over again, but I knew I never made any mistakes.

Then Mr. Marvello put his hand under the scarf and said: "He's there all right," and pulled away the scarf. And there he was, a little white rabbit with pink eyes and white ears with pink inside, just like I always wanted.

"Well, take him out, take him out," said Mr. Marvello. "He's all yours, boy. Now run along and get your mother's scarf back before she finds out. I don't know what you are going to do about that brooch. . . ."

I didn't know either. In the end I had to tell Mum, but she didn't understand about the magic wand and smacked me and put me to bed.

I took a long time to walk home with my rabbit so as to have him all to myself without Mum and Dad and Roy around. I was very happy but I was sad also because, if Mr. Marvello had not walked on to the stage when he did, I could have had two or three or even four white rabbits. THE END

DRINKING—1

We drink one another's health and spoil our own.

Jerome K. Jerome

© *Charles Matthews, 1959*

The mechanical brain that's alive

continued from page 13

compared with the labour costs it saves.

This living computer will ultimately be the culmination of a long process of development. The original electronic computer was inevitably—and still is—a slave of the human beings operating it.

It can add, subtract, divide and multiply, but it will only do what it is told. It will not even produce the answer at the end of its calculations unless it is specifically ordered to do so.

Later, we developed computers that could "think" in an elementary way. Making logical deductions from a given set of facts is not much different fundamentally from adding up numbers, and by feeding in the necessary information, we could make the computer solve simple problems and play simple games. It could even develop skill.

The snag is that a computer has to store an enormous amount of information before it can act "intelligently." In an electronic brain this artificial memory is kept in large magnetic drums or tubes filled with mercury. The whole system is large and unwieldy.

It is also expensive. And it was the search for a less expensive mechanism that led to the discovery of the living computers.

The basic principle behind them is simple. A few of us had long held the view that there was no fundamental difference between the working of an electronic brain and the working of a human brain. If they worked in the same way, why couldn't they be built in the same way?

Human beings are obviously smaller than computers and they can perform immensely more complicated operations. Yet as a parcel of chemicals, the human body is worth only about ten shillings. If we could build a computer according to the same principles, it would be vastly cheaper than the gigantic contraptions of valves and wires which we have now.

One of the earliest experiments took place in the cellars of the United Steel Companies in Sheffield. There, Stafford Beer got a tank of water and filled it with large numbers of water-fleas. These are tiny organisms which can be seen only under a microscope.

Beer then fed iron filings to the water-fleas and set up a magnetic field by which he could control their movements. A simple electrical device enabled him to count how many fleas there were in each of several groups. He could then add or subtract by bringing the groups together or moving them apart and electrically counting the group that resulted.

Beer's experiment was not wholly successful. But it was a beginning. It had put scientists on to the idea of building computers out of bits of organism, or at any rate out of chemical processes.

He created life

Soon afterwards, Gordon Pask, of Solartron, built up another living system. But he did not use organisms that were already alive: he used particles of metal in a chemical solution through which he passed electric currents. He found that the particles came together and grew into threads in much the same way that animal tissues grow. He had, in fact, created an elementary form of life.

When he varied the strength and direction of the electric currents, the threads grew longer or broke up and reformed. So, if the electric currents were made to represent information fed into the system, the resulting pattern of threads could be interpreted to give the answer to the problem that was being put.

The same jump from dead to living materials has also been made in the transmission of information from one part of the computer to another. In the human body, this is done by the nerves. There is a chemical exchange between the inside and the outside of the nerve fibre, and this chemical exchange generates an electric current which passes the message. That is why the human body does not need a battery.

In computers, we have so far used wires carrying ordinary electric current. However, Dr. Saunders, of London, has shown that he can reproduce something very like a human nerve by having two chemicals, separated by a membrane which is itself chemical, produce an electric current which transmits the message. If we built a computer with nerves like this, it would be still more like a living thing.

At Bristol we have also reproduced something akin to a human being's visual memory. We discovered that cotton threads dipped in a chemical called sodium hydroxide conducted electricity, but each time a given current passed through, their resistance increased proportionately to the number of times it had done so. In other words, the threads had "remembered"—and this process is almost identical with the way the human body remembers things seen or heard.

Such a memory can serve as the basis of a computer, and we have already built a prototype which is capable of indefinite extension. In terms of chemistry and biology it is a "living" system, and, most important of all from the point of view of industry, it is extremely cheap to make.

A living computer has other advantages. It should ultimately be capable of all the subtleties of thought we associate with the human brain, but it will be immensely quicker. It now seems that a man thinks comparatively slowly, not because his brain is inefficient but because his eyes and ears are slow at taking in information.

In the living computer, information could, we hope, be assimilated almost instantaneously.

Again, as the living computer is developed, it will bear more and more resemblance to the human brain. By observing what happens in the computer, scientists will be able to find out more about the human brain itself—about how it works and how it sometimes fails to work.

Help for surgeons

Already, surgeons carrying out major operations use machines which reproduce the actions of the heart, lungs and kidneys while the real organs have been temporarily disconnected.

These substitutes are far too bulky to fit into the body permanently. But by using the techniques we are discovering in developing compact chemical models of living computers, it may soon be possible to build the major organs which can be fitted permanently into the patient's body when his original organs break down through age or disease. The patient with an incurable heart condition will not die. He will trade in his old heart for a new, artificial one.

We are in sight of being able to do this, because even now we can build systems which are made of the same basic materials as the human body. They can grow and learn and solve problems.

Later these living systems we do have will be able to give us much useful information about the human body. We could, for instance, perhaps reproduce entire mental life.

In case of illness, we could work out in advance the likely consequences of different lines of treatment.

These systems are not yet capable of independent life. But some of us believe that even this will ultimately be possible. THE END

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

These are your problems

says Roger Smithells

Inquiries pour in from JOHN BULL readers on everything from chimney pots to colour schemes. In finding the answers I have a team of willing helpers. Here they are on the job. Penelope Steane, left, married to an architect, now busy decorating her own first home, has great sympathy with others tackling the same job. Colin Gowers, himself a designer, takes a special interest in readers' own design ideas. Jean Bambrick, a domestic equipment expert, knows the answers to a thousand and one practical household problems

FOR over a year now I have been answering letters from JOHN BULL readers about home-making problems. It's a fascinating job because these letters help me just as much as I hope my answers help those of you who write. Through your letters I meet readers, get a glimpse of real homes in all parts of the world and of dream homes, too. Sometimes these dream homes are being planned by couples setting up house for the first time; sometimes by elderly people retiring to the haven where they will enjoy the rest of their days. But often enough the dream home is simply the next home—the one in which everything will be perfect at last. This dream I readily share, being an incurable optimist and having run through twenty-one homes myself.

Though the subjects of these letters are endlessly varied, one theme runs through them all—a vivid, practical enthusiasm for the art and craft of home-making. Never before have we all taken so much interest in the furnishing, equipment and decoration of our homes. Never before have there been so many stimulating ideas and devices for making the most of whatever kinds of homes we happen to have.

Among the thousands of questions which reach me there are some which crop up repeatedly. How to plan colour schemes; what to do about condensation; how to make the most of a small space—these seem to be everybody's problems. So this week I have picked out the six subjects about which I receive most inquiries. Here are the questions and here are some answers which may help fellow readers with the same problems on their hands.

. . . new little holes all over the chair . . .

THESE little holes, caused by woodworm—or furniture beetle, to give it its proper name—are a common source of anxiety. The grubs of the beetle, hatching out of eggs laid in crevices, feed for three to four years on the sapwood of the furniture, and finally emerge from little "flight" holes, to lay their eggs and start the cycle all over again. Softwood is more commonly attacked, but not until it is well seasoned, after about 20 years. Treatment is essential, or the woodworm will weaken the wood.

Inject the holes with a proprietary woodworm killer, like Rentokil or Wykamol. You don't need to treat every one, one every inch or two is enough. There are special bottles available with injectors, to use for this purpose. Then paint all over the surface of the furniture, inside and out, with the insecticide. Many people tell me that they use creosote equally effectively for destroying woodworm, but in fact it is advisable to use a product made specially for the job. Good woodworm killer contains a chemical which leaves a deposit in the wood to prevent further attacks, for five or ten years.

Rentokil also make an insecticidal polish. This will give protection to furniture which is not yet affected.

. . . water pouring down the walls and windows . . .

CONDENSATION spells disaster to kitchen and bathroom decorations. It often spreads to other parts of the house, making streaks down the walls and even bringing wallpaper down. Condensation is worst in kitchens and bathrooms, because of steam from hot water in taps and kettles. These rooms are often housed in thin-walled extensions to the house, and the warm wet air inside condenses on the cold wall and window surfaces, into the familiar drops of water which run down the wall, and are sometimes bad enough to form pools on the floor.

A real cure is better insulation, usually too big a job for most of us to tackle. You can improve the position by putting an extractor fan in your wall or window, to carry away the steam and ventilate the room. Constant heating will help to combat condensation, and there are special paints on sale to use for decorating.

Too many different patterns make for a fussy and featureless scheme. Such a treatment can make even a large room seem poky and crowded

One bold design makes a real impact when it is teamed with plain surfaces in varying tones, and simpler, textured upholstery

. . . help with a new colour scheme. My carpet is . . .

YOU can plan a colour scheme from scratch, of course, but most schemes have to take into account many of the objects and colours that you already have in the room. The best colours for your room also depend considerably on how much sunlight you get, what artificial light you have, the size of the room, and its proportions. Decorators' tricks with colour can help make the most of these.

Before you start planning, make a note of all the colours and patterns you already have in the room. Bring samples of possible new papers and paint back with you to try in the room with the lighting you have.

In north-facing rooms, which often look cold, warm reds, yellows and oranges are the best choice, to make the room look cosier. Conversely, in a south or west-facing room with a warm light, cool blues, greys and greens look effective and make the room look larger, more airy and spacious.

The contrast between warm and cool colours will also help you in a room with awkward proportions. A too-long, narrow room can be made to look squarer with a warm, darkish colour on the walls at the end, and white or neutral grey or green at the sides.

Choose wallpaper with care. In a room which already has patterned carpets, covers and curtains, a patterned paper is going to look fussy. But if you have plain colours in the rest of the room, a splash of pattern on the walls will be a welcome relief.

Avoid the trap of choosing too many colours to "go with" one another. A room of colour harmonies will look dull, however exciting the colour itself is.

A touch of contrast, however small, will give your scheme extra sparkle

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continued from previous page

. . . advise me how to prepare surfaces for decoration . . .

Good preparation is vital to good decoration. New paint will not disguise a chipped or uneven underlayer; if anything, it will emphasize it. So make sure that the surface is even for the best results.

Check on old wallpaper. You can paint or paper over this, if it is in good order. If it doesn't pass the test, remove it by soaking it thoroughly with water, leaving for a few hours, and stripping off with a broadknife. Wash off all remaining traces of paste, fill cracks and leave to dry. Then you can put up new wallpaper or paint.

New plaster should be allowed to dry thoroughly before you apply your final decorations. This process takes up to six months. Before hanging wallpaper treat the wall surface with a coat of size.

If the old paint on woodwork is in good condition you can repaint it successfully. Wash it down with sugar soap, rinse with clear water, then roughen the surface with glasspaper or an abrasive block. If the paint is in bad condition strip it all off with a blowlamp and scraper, or a paint stripper.

Repaint, starting with a coat of primer, then one or two coats of undercoat before the finishing coat.

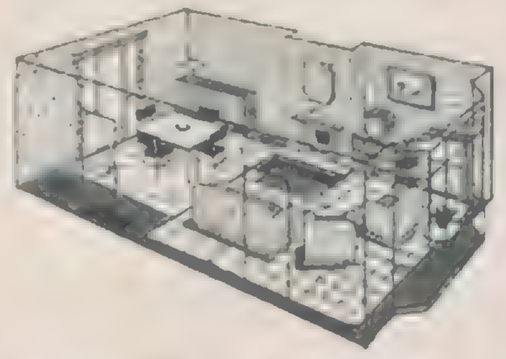
• • • • • • • • • •

. . . noise next door keeps the children awake . . .

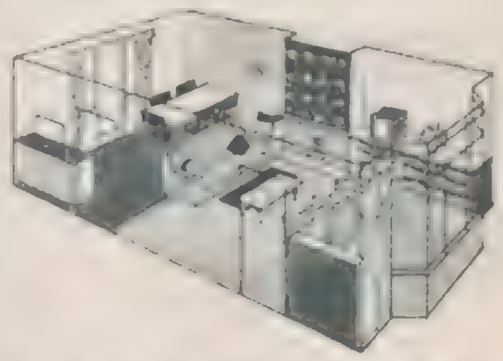
I am planning a feature to deal with every aspect of sound insulation in a few weeks. You can insulate your side of a thin party wall by refacing the wall with insulating board, fixed to the wall surface on battens, leaving a cavity of an inch between. Fill this with insulating material—quilted mineral wool is simple to handle—and you will hear less of noisy neighbours. If you can persuade them to do the same thing on their side of the wall, the results will be even better. Materials are cheap: insulating board about 4d. to 6d. a foot, quilt about 2s. a yard.

• • • • • • • • • •

. . . never enough space though it's a big room . . .



Dining and living areas are all mixed. Seats are in a draught. The door opens on to the settee. The sideboard is badly placed



A better scheme. The settee divides the room, a longer dining table is used and the chairs and settee are better grouped

So many of us find that we can't move in rooms where there should be enough space. The cause is usually bad planning, but it is sometimes difficult to see how to improve the arrangement of your furniture.

I am asked most about the replanning of old-fashioned kitchens. Broadly speaking, a kitchen divides itself into five areas: for food preparation, cooking, washing-up, serving and storage. These areas should be self-contained, but arranged in a logical order round the room to save you walking too far between them. The best arrangement in a medium-sized room is round three walls, but if doors come in awkward places the furniture can probably be ranged along two opposite walls.

Furniture arrangement in other rooms should allow desks to be put where light will fall on the paper and chairs positioned to give a good light for reading. Furniture should not be placed where you have to edge round it, or where opening doors bump into it. It should be on the same scale as the room. Large furniture crammed into a small house will always look congested. Consider draughts, too. If an armchair is placed in a direct line between the door and the fireplace the occupant will probably have a chilly wind blowing down the back of his neck.

• • • • • • • • • •

Roger Smithells will help you

I AM always pleased to hear about your home-making achievements and help with your problems. I also like to hear of any good ideas you have.

Small samples of the fabrics and papers you already have make colour scheming simpler, and please, if possible, enclose a sketch of the room, with the doors, windows and odd features clearly marked, with measurements. If you have any strong colour preferences or dislikes, please tell me about them.

Please number your questions, if there are more than one, and try to limit them to three in each letter. Clear writing is a help.

Send your letter with the stamped envelope to me: Roger Smithells, "John Bull : Everybody's Weekly," 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

What was the Star of Bethlehem?

continued from page 9

would have been plainly visible at the time the wise men were in Jerusalem—whereas, apparently, it was not.

Yet another theory suggests that the star was our old friend Halley's Comet.

Comets have been termed the "stray" members of the solar system. They are not massive, solid bodies; a typical comet is made up of relatively small pieces of matter in a gaseous envelope.

All comets revolve round the sun, but most of the brilliant ones take many hundreds of years to complete one journey, so that they cannot be predicted. The exception is Halley's Comet, which has a period of only seventy-six years; it was last bright in 1910, and is due back in 1986. It was also visible in 11 B.C., and may well have been conspicuous from the Holy Land.

We believe that Christ must have been born rather before A.D. 1. This means that 11 B.C. lies within the "period of uncertainty."

Speaking from a strictly scientific point of view, it may be the most plausible explanation we can offer. However, we are faced with many of the difficulties mentioned earlier, and this brings me to a theory of my own, which I advance with great diffidence. I suggest that the 'Star of Bethlehem may have been due to two meteors.

A meteor is a small piece of matter moving round the sun in the manner of a dwarf planet. Under normal conditions it cannot be seen, but if a meteor happens to come close to the earth it enters the upper atmosphere; friction against the air-particles causes heat, and the meteor is destroyed in the streak of luminosity which we call a shooting-star. An exceptionally large meteor—the size of a tennis ball, say—may be strikingly conspicuous; and the after-effects may remain visible for anything up to a quarter of an hour.

Suppose that the wise men had seen such a meteor in the east? They could not have had the slightest idea as to its cause, and to them it would have seemed truly miraculous. Very probably, too, it would have been the first such object which they had ever seen; even today, in the space age, there are many people who have never observed anything of the sort. If a second meteor had appeared later, more or less in the same position in the sky, they would have regarded the miracle as confirmed.

This would not be too improbable a coincidence. Several times in each year the earth passes through a "shoal" of meteors; at present the richest shower of shooting-stars occurs in August, which may well have been the month in which Christ was born. It also explains why the star was invisible during the wise men's stay in Jerusalem, and why none of the astronomical records mention it at all.

If we want to explain the star as being due to some astronomical body, we have a choice between a nova or supernova, Halley's Comet—or just possibly some other comet which has escaped the records—or my own suggestion of two meteors. None of the explanations is wholly convincing, and if we reject them all we come back to the wise men's idea that the star was divine. THE END

On this Christmas Day . . .

continued from page 7

Australian speech specialist, he had been known to take four minutes to say twenty-five words. A Christmas message of average length could have taken him two and a half hours to deliver.

He broadcast from the study at Sandringham, as his father had done, but he did not sit at the big desk. He stood, and standing by him, holding his arm, was Logue. After the broadcast, the specialist wiped his brow, exclaiming: "Well done, well done, m'boy."

In spite of the specialist's praise, the broadcast was dropped the following year. But on George VI's insistence, it was revived in 1939 when, with the war in its early months, he realized the value of this personal message, delivered to an audience of 150 millions.

DRINKING—2

Some men are like musical glasses—to produce their finest tones you must keep them wet.

S. T. Coleridge

After that, George VI—who made fourteen broadcasts altogether—insisted on going on the air "live" year by year, even in 1948, when he was ill. Only in 1951, shortly before his death, would he agree to making a record.

When a royal broadcast finished, there was always a rush from the drawing-room, where the family had listened, to congratulate the monarch. The Queen led the rush after her father's first broadcast. George VI had asked the B.B.C. to let him hear a playback of his message immediately he finished.

The Royal Family—the King, the Queen, Queen Mary and the two Princesses—had all entered the control room to hear it and there was a good deal of happy noise. Suddenly everyone realized, but not quite simultaneously, that a loudspeaker in the room, relaying the end of the broadcast, was still playing the National Anthem.

The Family and the engineers froze to attention—while London could be heard by the B.B.C. men on their headphones asking anxiously why Sandringham had gone silent.

In those days, when Woods and the small B.B.C. and Post Office team arrived at Sandringham they were given the run of the house while they made their preparations.

As far as possible, they kept to the rooms allotted to them. They ate their Christmas dinner—always served at noon, before the broadcast—in the Stewards' Room, and incurred the sad displeasure of Miller, George VI's personal servant, by refusing to drink the King's health in anything but water.

All this was changed when television came to Sandringham at Christmas, 1956. Three large cameras had to be brought into the house. Cables snaked down corridors and to a B.B.C. outside telecast truck where the producer, Anthony Craxton, was stationed.

The speech was relayed to the television transmitter at Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham, by four micro-wave links. The first was on the edge of the Sandringham estate; then on to Friday Bridge, in the Fens, where a small team of engineers spent their Christmas Day on top of a 120-ft. water-tower; from the Fens to a farmyard near Buckminster; then on to Bardon Hill, a rocky tor in Charnwood Forest.

It became a B.B.C. custom to send a jeep, laden with cold turkey and mince-pies, round these lonely outposts.

Changes in the character of the royal Christmas broadcast had been suggested after George VI's death. Speaking directly to the people could now best be done by television. And the introductory round-the-Commonwealth programme was becoming hackneyed.

But tradition changes slowly. The Queen delivered four sound-only broadcasts before television was introduced. And a major change in the preceding programme had to wait until this year.

The 1959 programme will originate in Sydney, arranged by the Australian Broadcasting Commission. And—biggest departure from tradition of all—the Queen's message will first be heard at 9 a.m. THE END

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS TODAY · 6

by Gilbert Harding

ANGER

The passion that robs us of reason

I'm told that the Chinese have a theory that most men die of suppressed rage. I find that hard to believe, but it's a fact that people who habitually bottle up their anger run the risk of affecting the heart, the blood pressure and the digestive system.

We all lose our tempers occasionally, and for scores of reasons we are often irritable, ungracious or unreasonable.

We can always apologize for a display of temper and make it up afterwards. But if we allow our anger to seethe inside us there is always the chance that, apart from the damage it does to us mentally and physically, it will explode at last far more violently than it would have done in the first place.

This is just what happened to a radio fan whose listening was spoilt by interference from his next-door neighbour's television set. Instead of saying what he felt at once, he kept it bottled up for months. Then in a burst of fury he took a gun and fired eighteen shots into their house, smashing the television set and wounding his neighbour twice and the man's wife once.

Anger becomes a deadly sin when it leads to violence or to the desire for revenge. Why did Cain kill Abel? For no better reason than that he was furious that Abel's sacrifice appeared to be more acceptable to God than his, so to revenge himself he killed Abel. And as we know, he did himself great harm and nobody any good.

Poison of revenge

There are few things more self-poisoning than the desire for revenge. One of the unhealthy things in modern society is the extraordinary number of otherwise sane and balanced people who want others to take their revenge for them. "Bring back the birch and the lash," they cry; "Flog them," "Hang them," "Teach them a sharp lesson."

These expressions of public anger are all the more evil when they are the result of whipped-up emotion which drives out reason. When we give way to these deadly sins, any of them, we put ourselves out of human circulation, because reason, the quality which above all others separates us from beasts, has been forgotten or set aside.

I cannot think of any single instance in history where the gratified desire for revenge has done any good at all.

We are talking about sins, but I must mention righteous anger. There *is* such a thing. The Bible tells us, "Be ye angry, and sin not." Our Lord was capable of anger, with the fig tree for pretending to be fruitful when it was barren, and with the spivs in the temple.

Few of us, however, no matter who we are, can claim to be so abundant in virtue as to be able to indulge in righteous anger, and those who have least right of all are the self-righteous.

The parent or schoolmaster who corrects a child or pupil is not guilty of this dreadful sin if, and only if, punishment is meted out calmly, and not in a fit of temper.

The angry judge is a bad judge, and in this country, where we are rather more fortunate in our judges than many of us realize, there are often cases in which the judge postpones sentence for some particularly beastly offence until his own anger has cooled.

A judge who does that is really following the advice often given to children—"Count ten." As a child I was told that ten wasn't enough for me: I had to count fifteen. We may be worse tempered after counting ten than we were before, but at least we have tried.

Twenty-year feud

Certainly it is much to be preferred to have a row, which often clears the air, than it is to bear a grudge.

Not long ago a man died in a Warwickshire village. His death was reported in the national press because it brought to an end a twenty-year-old feud with his brother. In all that time the brothers had lived in the same cottage and worked in the same sawmill without ever exchanging a word.

They had a grudge against each other as a result of an argument, but neither would ever say what the cause of the quarrel was, and they were not reunited even when one was on his deathbed.

If we find fault with others too easily and condemn them angrily for mistakes, failings and vices, we shall have little time left to watch our own p's and q's. Next time you want to blow your top, stop to think about your anger. Is it caused by some real threat, some genuine injustice or imposition? If so, short of violence or revenge, it can be a stimulus to overcome the cause.

But perhaps your anger is really the result of an imagined slight, an unreasonable demand, or some unworthy ambition. In this case, turn your anger on your self-deception; face the facts.

The best antidote to anger is to consider how much we ourselves expect understanding and forgiveness, and to realize how often we get it.

So next time you want to gnash your teeth in rage and despair, and start thinking out suitable tortures for the object of your anger, count ten, then take the dog for a walk, or go to see a funny film, or chop wood, or write an indignant letter to the press. You'll feel better afterwards. THE END

NEXT WEEK: The deadly sin of gluttony

Raffles and Little Bo-Peep

continued from page 6

to another is by registered postal packet. Suppose, then, the commercial-travelling Pardick has been systematically pulling off jobs on his travels and sending the swag by registered mail to his highly respectable brother, Leo."

"But last Tuesday morning was that hundredth chance?" I said. "Some interloper was on to the game, had information on the latest posting of a packet and staged the ambush for the postman. But why didn't he hold up Leo Pardick?"

"Probably because he knew that both Pardicks are alert as foxes and dangerous as wolves—at any rate compared with a defenceless postman. No, Bunny, it's you and I who're going to tackle Leo Pardick, who, by the way, has flitted."

"Flitted?" I said.

"The ambushing of the postman was a red light for him," Raffles said. "However, I've traced him. He undoubtedly has a lot of accumulated loot salted away in highly portable and negotiable form—and we need it—to advance Kate Dover's career.

"At the present moment, Leo Pardick, with his appearance quite completely altered, and calling himself Thomas Elderfen, is staying at the Embankment Hotel, Strand. I think his brother plans to join him there. Then they'll probably leave the country.

"I'm now going to see Ivor Kern," he said. "Then I, too, shall be moving into the Embankment Hotel, with *my* appearance slightly altered. I want you to keep in close touch with Ivor Kern, Bunny. As soon as I'm ready for you to join me, he'll tell you."

He took up a suitcase and departed.

The Embankment Hotel was a solid, respectable old place, a favourite with business men from outside London. At five o'clock on the Monday afternoon, a porter carried up my two suitcases to a room on the second floor. One suitcase contained my personal things. The other, which was locked, had been handed to me by Ivor Kern. I did not know what was in it.

My room looked out over the Embankment.

I was standing, smoking nervously, when Raffles came in. His appearance, like my own—I had registered in a false name—had been slightly but effectively altered.

"Good man, Bunny," he said. "On the dot, as always. You brought the suitcase from Ivor?"

SITTING on my bed, he lighted a cigarette. "Here's the situation. Pardick's carrying his swag in a padlocked briefcase which is now in the hotel safe in the manager's office."

"The hotel safe?" I said. "That's more than we bargained for."

"The crib certainly presents a problem, Bunny—as you'll see," Raffles said. "The manager's office, which adjoins the reception desk in the hall, is locked at night, but I've found a means of access to the office and I've made a preliminary examination of the safe. I shall need from one to two clear hours to get that safe open. But there's a joker, Bunny."

"What kind of a joker?" I said.

"The time element," said Raffles. "The outer door of the hotel is bolted at midnight. One man—the night porter—remains on duty in the hall. He keeps a loaded revolver in the reception desk and also has an alarm bell."

"I don't like this," I said.

"Listen to me," said Raffles. "A low light is left on all night in the manager's office. In the door, exactly opposite the safe, there's a small peephole window through which the night porter takes a glance into the office from time to time. Now, then. A plate of sandwiches and a bottle of beer are left out for the night porter's supper. He has it at about one a.m., if all's quiet. To eat it in comfort, he sits down in one of that row of saddlebag chairs in the hall. He allows himself about twenty minutes."

"And except for that twenty minutes," I said, "he's liable to glance through the peephole at any minute? But you say you need from one to two clear hours. Raffles, it's an impossible crib."

"I wouldn't say that," said Raffles, "though this factor of contriving the necessary working time certainly makes the crib an exceptionally pretty teaser.

"However, there are points in our favour. For one thing, when I found my way of access to the manager's office on Saturday night and, while the night porter was having his supper, cased the job, I found that the room has a fitted carpet. It stretches right to the wainscot. So the safe, set flush against the wall, stands *on* the carpet. The reason for the carpet is that the floor's parquet but pretty old, with a good many of the blocks none too tightly fitting. So I took a few measurements."

"Measurements?" I said, puzzled.

"For Ivor Kern," said Raffles. "I gave them to him on Sunday morning. The little job he's done for us, over the weekend, is in that suitcase you've just brought. I hope it may solve the working-time problem—which is the crucial obstacle to be overcome."

HE went on, "Now, then, Bunny, go down and dine. I'll be down presently. Remember, we don't know each other. While in the dining-room take note of three separate sets of doors—the service doors at one end; a pair of doors marked Banqueting Room at the other end; and the main doorway opening from the hall. Shortly before one a.m., I'll collect you from your room here and we'll get to work."

Over my meal in the dining-room I took careful note of the relative position of the doors Raffles had mentioned. Shortly before 1 a.m. I understood why he had told me to do this, for, by way of a service staircase and a stone-flagged passage which skirted the kitchens, we came soundlessly to a swing-door—one of the waiter-service doors I had been told to note—and re-entered the dining-room.

To the left, the double doors to the hall, where the night porter was on duty, stood ajar.

Quickly I moved after Raffles to the door marked Banqueting Room at the far end of the dining-room. He set down the suitcase, unlocked the door with a skeleton key, and we stepped into stuffy-smelling darkness.

"Not used once in a blue moon, this room," Raffles whispered. "I'm re-locking the door, in case the night porter should happen to try it if he walks round." From his gloved hand, a ray of light shot across the room. "That door leads into the manager's office. It's now just on one. The porter should be starting his supper."

AGAIN using a skeleton key, he opened the door to the manager's office. As he had warned me, there was a light on in there, not a strong one, but I saw at once the medium-sized safe standing, with a stack of ledgers on it, flush against the wall to the right.

Raffles moved to the left, to a door opposite the safe, glanced through the square peephole window in the door, then whispered: "Keep an eye on him."

I took a cautious glance through the peephole into the hall. The reception desk was just to the right. Facing me across the hall was a row of deep saddlebag chairs with small, brass-topped tables between them. In one of the chairs, the night porter was just starting on his supper and a paper.

I stole a look at Raffles. He had lifted the stack of ledgers from on top of the safe, and set them on the floor. Using a ruler and a sharp knife, he made a cut in the fitted carpet parallel to the safe and about a foot to the left of it. From the corner of that cut he made another, at right angles, along past the front of the safe to the door of the banqueting room. He then rolled forward the strip of carpet and underfelt he had cut until the roll was pressed against the safe.

Sweating, I glanced out through the peephole. The night porter was on his second sandwich.

I looked at Raffles. With a chisel he was further loosening an already loose parquet block against the side of the safe. He worked out first one block, then a second, adjoining it and farther in under the edge of the safe. He unlocked his suitcase, put the two blocks into it, took out a flat tobacco tin. Over the handkerchief that masked his face he glanced at me in swift inquiry. I looked through the peephole, nodded reassurance. He beckoned me to him, gave me the tin.

"French chalk," he whispered. "When I heave, throw plenty of it well in under the safe."

He took a crowbar from the suitcase. Inserting an end of it in the hole he had made under the safe he strained upward with all his strength. The safe, the strip of carpet on which it stood, the roll of carpet pressed against it, tilted to the left. At once I threw white powder in thickly on to the dusty parquet floor.

"Right," he gasped, and let the safe down gently.

He returned the crowbar to the suitcase, stepped to the peephole, glanced out, returned to me. Taking the tin, he scattered French chalk thickly along the strip of parquet to the door of the banqueting room. He opened that door, scattered more chalk on the threshold and on the parquet floor of that room.

"Now then," he breathed. "You push. I pull."

UNROLLING the strip of carpet, he took a good grip on it with his gloved hands. While he pulled, backing towards the banqueting room, I pushed hard on the safe itself. To my surprise it moved—reluctantly at first, then more easily; and on the parquet made slippery by the French chalk, the strip of carpet with the safe standing on it moved into the banqueting room.

"Fine," Raffles whispered. "Back to your post!"

In an instant, my heart going like a drum, I was at the peephole. The night porter had still a sandwich and a half left; his beer glass was a third full.

I glanced at Raffles. From his suitcase he had taken a small roll of carpet. It was of the same dark red, with the same pattern, as the office carpet. It fitted exactly the gap left by the strip he had cut away.

He now took from the suitcase a square panel of wood. It was of the same colour as the safe now standing in the banqueting room. He set the panel flat on the new strip of carpet. Then he took from the suitcase two more panels. He fitted them, upright, into slots in the base panel. Next he fitted a panel across the top. Finally he added a wooden door, fitted with a metal lever handle and a combination dial, and there before my eyes was the twin of the real safe.

Raffles placed the stack of ledgers on top of the safe he had built and motioned me to join him. I took a last glance through the peephole at the night porter, now coming to the end of his supper, then I nipped after Raffles into the banqueting room. He locked the door.

"Well done, Bunny," he whispered. "It's all plain sailing now. You can leave the rest to me. I can take as long as I like to open this safe."

"Magnificent, Raffles!"

He chuckled. "Slip up to your room by the way we came. The manager's an early bird, but if you check out at about six a.m. that'll be well before he goes to his office. I shall be away by then myself. Drop in at Albany for lunch and I'll let you know what I've found."

What was in Pardick's briefcase proved to be the richest haul we had made for a long time.

WE went three days later to see Kate Dover at 34 Raynescourt Avenue. First, though, we picked up Derek Fenn at his house.

"Who is this girl you want me to meet?" he asked.

"A friend of ours," Raffles said. "She's invited the three of us to tea."

After tea, Raffles asked Kate if she would do something for him.

"That is," he said, "if it wouldn't remind you too painfully of the appalling experience which you—and the postman, poor chap—had."

Kate studied him thoughtfully. "I think I know what you're going to ask," she said with a smile.

Kate sang, very quietly:

Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And doesn't know where to find them.
Leave them alone and they'll come home,
And bring their tails behind them.

As Kate's voice died away there was a small cry of protest from Drusilla.

"Mama! Darling!" She ran across the room to Kate. "You haven't lost your sheep any more." She pressed her cheek to Kate's and, comfortingly, stroked Kate's hair. "You've found us!" said Drusilla triumphantly.

I happened to notice Derek Fenn's expression. Never had I seen such naked longing as there was in the eyes of that brilliant young theatrical producer as he looked at Kate and Drusilla.

Raffles must have seen it, too. Pressing out his cigarette in an ashtray, he rose. "I'm afraid," he said, in his easy way, "Manders and I must be getting along. We have a dinner engagement. Derek is lucky, living so near. He need not stir yet."

"So much for our plans to advance Kate's career, Bunny," said Raffles ruefully as we walked to the station. "More likely we've put a stop to it. We took Derek there to arouse his professional interest in Kate, but what we're aroused is unquestionably his personal interest. Did you see his expression? He'll marry her, mark my words."

"He's born lucky, that fellow," I said enviously.

"No question of it," said Raffles. "You know, Bunny, it's odd to think that you and I are debarred by an increasing number of reasons from being able to do what Derek can do—that is, propose marriage to a lovely girl like Kate Dover."

"Reasons?" I said, puzzled. "What reasons?"

He gave me a strange look.

"The 'tales' behind us, Bunny," said A. J. Raffles. THE END

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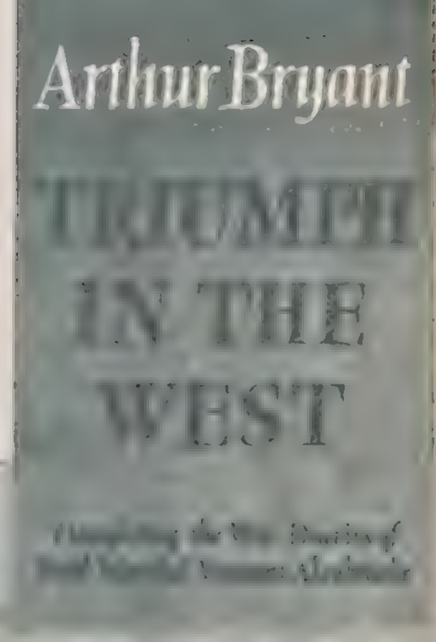
NEXT WEEK

Every parent will want to read René Lecler's fascinating article on BRITAIN'S BIGGEST MONEY SPINNER—BABY

Also two new stories by WILLIAMS FORREST and JOHN NIELD

The revealing wartime diaries of

LORD ALANBROOKE



Alanbrooke (left), Eisenhower and Churchill tour the front. . . . Alanbrooke admired Eisenhower personally, but constantly attacked his ideas of war

Eisenhower's plan drags out the war

Alanbrooke had never liked American strategy. Now it was clear: the war would last through yet another winter

PART FOUR

THE opportunity for decisive victory, at the decisive point before winter, had passed. For though at the beginning of September, after their crushing defeats in Normandy and the Balkans, the Germans were off-balance and stripped of reserves, their recovery was swift.

The bewildered generals and officers captured during the Allied race through Northern France and Belgium had declared, with truth, that there was nothing between their captors and Berlin, that the Western Wall was unmanned, and that there were no reserves in Germany nor plans for resistance. But awakened to the urgency of their peril, Hitler and his satraps soon made both. By calling up boys of sixteen and combing the navy, Luftwaffe and reserved occupations, the Führer during the autumn of 1944 created forty new divisions.

To Brooke, the British Army's C.I.G.S. returning from the Quebec Conference, this was tragic. When he had left England the invasion of northern Germany by Montgomery's victorious armour had seemed imminent. Now the gates of the Ruhr had been closed and barred and the empty ramparts were manned.

In Italy, too, where at the end of August, Churchill, Alexander and Wilson had all confidently hoped for

Triumph in the west

continued from previous page

an autumn invasion of Istria and Austria, the failure to strike at Germany's heart was exerting its melancholy influence. Instead of abandoning the Apennines and Lombardy plain as the Reich behind them went down in flames, Kesselring's men, conscious that the homeland was being saved, put up as staunch a fight as any in German history.

Alexander, his troops confronted by one grimly contested mountain ridge after another, was forced on September 26 to write to the C.I.G.S.: "The trouble is my forces are too weak relative to the enemy to force a breakthrough . . . . We are fighting in a country where, it is generally agreed, a superiority of at least three to one is required for successful offensive operations. It will be small wonder, therefore, if we fail to score a really decisive success when the opposing forces are so equally matched."

To which Brooke could only reply: "It is not possible to send reinforcements to the Mediterranean and you will have to continue to live on your own resources." For the chief sufferers from the failure to follow up Montgomery's victory were the British who, having thrown their last military reserves into an all-out effort to end the struggle in Europe in 1944, now faced its almost certain continuance into another year and, as a result, a growing gap between their manpower needs and resources.

Brooke resumed his Whitehall routine on September 25—the day the Arnhem battle ended. His diary continues:

"September 27. Cabinet at 6 p.m. at which Winston wanted to discuss the desirability of responding to German requests to send food in for the British population of the Channel Islands. Decided not to send any in and to reply to Germans that it was their duty to keep population reasonably fed or to surrender if they were unable to do so.

"October 2. A longish Chiefs of Staff meeting when we discussed the Foreign Office attitude to our paper on dismemberment of Germany. We had considered the possible future and more distant threat to our security in the shape of an aggressive Russia. Apparently the Foreign Office could not admit that Russia might some day become unfriendly.

"Cabinet at 5.30 p.m., and at 10 p.m. The P.M. suddenly informed us that he and Anthony Eden were off to Moscow on Saturday next and that he wanted me to come with him! This is a bit of a surprise and clashes with my plans to go to France on Wednesday till Sunday. I shall have to shorten the French trip.

Monty at fault

"October 3. Plans for Moscow are taking shape and we start on Saturday evening as far as I can see.

"October 4. After lunch started off for Heston aerodrome to visit Eisenhower at Versailles. He had sent over his special Mitchell machine that cruises at 260 miles per hour. We had a somewhat bumpy journey through storms. It gave me a great thrill going through Versailles again. The last time had been in 1939.

"October 5. A conference by Ike at 11.30 of his army group commanders. Ike ran the conference very well. It consisted first of all of statements by army group commanders, followed by the air and navy. Ike then explained his future strategy which consisted of the capture of Antwerp, an advance to the Rhine in the north and south, forcing the Rhine north and south of the Ruhr, capture of Ruhr, followed by an advance on Berlin either from Ruhr or from Frankfurt, depending on which proved most promising.

"During the whole discussion one fact stood out clearly, that (access to) Antwerp must be captured with the least possible delay.

"I feel that Monty's strategy for once is at fault. Instead of carrying out the advance on Arnhem he ought to have made certain of Antwerp in the first place. Ramsay brought this out well in the discussion and criticized Monty freely. Ike nobly took all blame on himself as he had approved Monty's suggestion to operate on Arnhem. The atmosphere was good and friendly in spite of some candid criticisms of the administrative situation.

"After lunch I flew back, doing the journey Paris-London in one hour and ten minutes. After dinner called up P.M. to go round to him. All he wanted was to discuss with me my visit to Eisenhower and to hear the gossip. I found Portal there fixing up final details for the trip to Moscow which are now settled.

"October 7. A quiet day at home with early dinner so as to be ready for Boyle at 8.30 p.m. when he is to pick me up for Lyneham airfield where I am to meet Anthony Eden and depart at midnight. At 12.10 a.m. sharp we took off into the darkness."

The chief reason for the visit of the Prime Minister and Brooke to Moscow was Churchill's determination to solve the Polish problem.

During the Warsaw rising in August, the Kremlin had behaved with gross inhumanity, not only making no attempt to use its armies—then only a few miles away—to aid the Polish insurgents, but flatly refusing to allow the British and American air forces landing-fields from which to drop supplies on the city. As a result the rising had been crushed with the slaughter of 200,000 Poles, including the flower of those who might have re-created an independent Poland after the war, while a number of British and American airmen had needlessly lost their lives: Stalin's contemptuous excuse was that the Polish Home Army was worthless and led by irresponsible "criminals" and "adventurers."

A few days before the Warsaw rising the Red Army had captured the Polish city of Lublin and had at once set up there, in opposition to the exiled Polish Government in London, a "National Committee of Liberation" of Moscow-trained Communists. Behind this façade the Kremlin now proposed to redraw Poland's frontiers so as to incorporate nearly half its prewar territory in Russia while it denounced the Polish Ministers in London as fascists and traitors.

A grave challenge

As Great Britain had gone to war to preserve the independence of Poland and had given shelter to its government and army in exile, Churchill was faced by a grave moral challenge.

There were other questions for discussion with Russia. The British landing in Istria, if it was to take place as Churchill still hoped, needed in particular to be synchronized with the Russian advance towards the Danube. On the way to Moscow the Prime Minister and the C.I.G.S. broke their journey at Naples to discuss the possibilities of this operation with Generals Wilson and Alexander.

"October 9. When we approached Moscow it became evident that the pilot was not quite clear as to where he was, and he started hawking around and finally found an aerodrome on which he came down and was told that the right aerodrome was some thirty kilometres farther on. We took off again and were very soon over Moscow. We landed just before 12 noon (Moscow time), having done the trip from London in exactly thirty-four hours. We were met by Molotov, Maisky, a bevy of Russian generals, Clark Kerr, Harriman, Brocas Burrows, etc. A guard of honour to be inspected and marched past, the whole of 'God Save the King,' and the Russian National Anthem. Finally a broadcast speech by Winston.

"October 10. Moscow. I had a wonderful sleep and then went round to the office they have established for me in the Embassy. Beyond a few telegrams there was little work for me there, but I discovered we were all invited by Stalin to a large lunch for 2.30 p.m. Great smartness all round and all Foreign Office staff, including the interpreters, have now blossomed out into uniforms of a grey colour.

"Stalin greeted me and was in a most affable mood. The lunch was a complete banquet, starting with masses of hors-d'oeuvres, which included caviare. We passed on to sucking-pig, then small scallops of mushrooms, followed by fish, then chicken and partridge, finishing up with ices. We had, as usual, a series of speeches proposing everybody's health. Molotov started with the health of the P.M., then Eden, then myself, then Ismay, then Harriman, etc., etc., and we all had to reply in turn.

"Finally Stalin himself got up and began a long speech. He referred to Winston's and Harriman's speeches, in which they had mentioned the unreadiness for war of Britain and America. Stalin said this was the same in the case of the Russian forces. Why was this? The reason was easy to find: we were all three peace-loving nations with no aggressive thoughts. Germany and Japan, both aggressors, were ready for war because they wanted war.

"How was this to be prevented in future? Only by the co-operation of the three peace-loving nations, provided they maintained the power to enforce peace when necessary, etc.

"Finally, Molotov said he was in an aggressive mood and that he insisted we all fill our glasses with champagne to drink an important toast he had to propose and one for which there must be no heel-taps, and he himself would see that the glasses were emptied. He then proposed the health of the three leaders and we had to drain our glasses. Luckily up to then I had got off lightly and had only had one vodka and one glass of white wine.

"It was 5.30 p.m. when we rose from the table. We had sat three solid hours, listening to politicians and diplomats informing each other of their devotion and affection and expressing sentiments very far detached from veracity.

Failure to strike

"October 12. There is some fable about some hunters going out to shoot a bear who on the eve of the shoot became so busy arguing about the sale of the skin and the sharing of the proceeds that they forgot to shoot the bear! I feel this is what we are doing here. Ever since we have arrived we have been busy discussing postwar settlements and as a result have completely neglected up to date the problem of how we are going to finish the war.

"During the morning I went over to see Winston in bed. He aims at leaving here on Monday and returning to London by Friday; I hope he keeps to this plan.

"In the evening I went to the opera to see *Prince Igor*. A vast theatre with the stage larger than the auditorium. Very fine music, singing, scenery and

Everybody's Puzzling

QUIZZLE

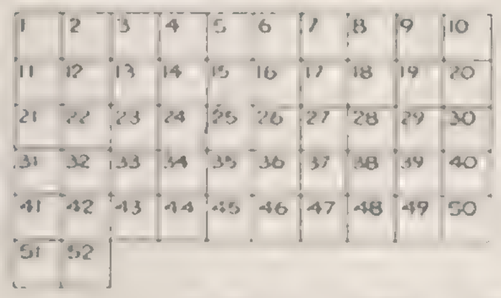
The letters in numbered squares, if placed in the small grid to the left of the puzzle in numerical sequence, will spell a well-known quotation and help to check your solutions.

CLUE DOWN

A. Does this imply that no Left Wing member ever shops? (3, 8, 2, 6, 5).

CLUES ACROSS

A. To punish or censure severely.
B. Aircraft flown by screw revolving on vertical axis.
C. To enrich with a gift.
D. One who carries golf clubs.
E. Form of Hindustani spoken in Pakistan.
F. Tube by which liquid is drawn by atmospheric pressure.
G. Badge combining emblems of Lancaster and York, adopted by Henry VIII (5, 4).
H. A place or time some way distant.
I. Upright division between the lights of a window.
J. The heath genus.
K. Platform for public speaking.
L. Extract used for treating diabetes.
M. Medieval vassal or feudal peasant.
N. Artist's studio.
O. However.
P. Woollen yarn.
Q. Of the Greek capital.
R. Sailor's story.
S. Wooden slab used as roofing slate.
T. Beginning again.
U. Neck of land connecting two larger portions.
V. An epicure.
W. Capital of Cuba.
X. Garden herb.



BRAIN TEASER by Fred Borders

Mary Dawson decided that this year she would again make a batch of Christmas puddings for her family. She hadn't made any of these puddings for several years, but remembered that her last efforts were a success.

She looked for the recipe she had used that year, but could only find a bill for ingredients which ran: "Currants at 1s. 3d. per packet; Raisins at 1s. 5d. per packet; Sultanas at 2s. 0½d. per packet." The bill totalled exactly £1.

How did Mary find from the bill the number of packets of each fruit she had used?

NOW TURN TO PAGE 34 FOR THE ANSWERS

dresses; in fact far better staged than anything that could be done in London. It was a wonderful and most impressive performance. The theatre was packed, all stalls being reserved for commissars and officers. No sergeants allowed in them and this is a country of supposed equality. We had tried to take stalls for some of our sergeant clerks, but were informed that they could not be admitted! Opera lasted from 7.30 to midnight."

After the war Alanbrooke wrote:

"That morning whilst I was with Winston he suddenly looked up at me and asked: 'Why did not the King give Monty his baton when he visited him in France?' I replied that I did not know, but that, as batons were not Woolworth stores, they had to be made and that probably one was not ready. 'No!' replied Winston, 'that is not it. Monty wants to fill the Mall when he gets his baton! And he will not fill the Mall!'

"I assured him that there was no reason for Monty to fill the Mall on that occasion. But he continued: 'Yes, he will fill the Mall because he is Monty, and I will not have him filling the Mall!'

"Apparently he went on turning this matter over in his mind, for on the journey home he suddenly turned to me and said: 'Monty will not fill the Mall when he gets his baton!'

"I took the first opportunity I had to warn Monty to keep his visit to Buckingham Palace as quiet as possible."

Successful talk

Up till now Brooke had had little of importance to do in Moscow and had spent the time mainly in sightseeing, in which, according to General Ismay's secretary, who organized the social activities of the British delegation, he took an almost boyish delight. The primary purpose of the visit being political, the brunt was borne by the Prime Minister, who, on the night of his arrival after thirty-six hours' almost continuous travelling, embarked on a highly successful conference with Stalin as to the demarcation of British and Russian military control in the Balkans.

On the thirteenth, ignoring a temperature, the indomitable old man had two long, trying sessions with his host, first with the Polish Prime Minister, whom he had summoned from London in the hope of a settlement that would establish some kind of independence for Poland, and then with the Lublin Committee, trying with infinite patience to persuade the one to accept a realistic eastern frontier which would satisfy Russia, and the other to take the hand of their non-Marxist countrymen instead of abusing them and repeating the parrot demands and denunciations of Moscow.

The time had now come for the C.I.G.S. to play his part: to explain the British and American strategy and intentions to the Russian General Staff and Generalissimo and, by gaining their confidence, to obtain what the Western Allies so much needed to know, the Red Army's dispositions and plans for the coming winter in Europe and—a matter of even greater moment to Washington

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"Notice anything?"

—their proposals for their promised campaign in Manchuria against Japan. So far, neither at Moscow in 1942 nor at Teheran in 1943, had the Russian military leaders shown the slightest disposition to reveal anything to their allies at all.

Brooke's exposition was a triumph, and the Russians, who liked his tough, direct approach and uncompromising expression of his views much better than did the Americans, became far more frank about their own military plans than they had ever been before.

Even though, despite all his persistence, Churchill failed in his objective of saving Poland's independence, the Moscow Conference proved the heyday of Anglo-Russian friendship.

[After five more days in Moscow, spent mainly attending social functions, Brooke flew home via Cairo, reaching England on October 22.]

"October 23. Started in again with the usual routine of C.O.S. meetings and Cabinet meetings. I am glad to have had a bit of a change from this form of life, and it is rather hard to step into it again.

"I am very glad to have been back to Russia again; it is a country with much food for thought. One more of these vast experiments which humanity periodically carries out; experiments which lead to much bloodshed, upheaval, suffering and finally, when all is examined, some progress.

"In my mind all have their purpose; they turn the wheel of destiny one or two cogs forward towards the path of general progress. Humanity surges forward like the tide flowing. Successive waves of one or other 'ism' romp up the beach, only to be sucked back almost to where they started from. But in that 'almost' lies the progress forward."

While the C.I.G.S. had been in Moscow the fears he had expressed in his diary when Eisenhower assumed operational command in North-West Europe had been realized. It was now certain the war would continue for another winter. The failure to strike at the Ruhr in early September had been accompanied by a simultaneous failure to free the mouth of the Scheldt and make use of Antwerp.

The Supreme Commander, who, on taking over control of ground operations, had shrunk from the first for fear of extending his communications, had also neglected to ensure the other which would have shortened them. As a result, though the last of the Channel ports fell at the beginning of October, throughout that month and November the docks of the great Belgian port which Montgomery had captured unscathed at the beginning of September remained as useless as though the Germans were still in occupation.

Rain and winter set in early that autumn, partially grounding the Allies' tactical air forces and depriving them of what till now had been their greatest asset. Not only was the weather unfavourable to the offensive—the November rains proved the worst for years—but, owing to their overstrained supply lines, the Allies were short both of men and ammunition.

Yet, following a conference on October 18 with his senior commanders at Brussels, Eisenhower persisted in what his naval A.D.C. called his "strategy of stretch-out." On the twenty-eighth, rejecting Montgomery's renewed plea for concentration against the Ruhr, he issued orders for a general offensive, as soon as the approaches to Antwerp could be cleared, along a three

DRINKING—3

There are two reasons for drinking: one is when you are thirsty, to cure it; the other, when you are not thirsty, to prevent it. Prevention is better than cure.

T. L. Peacock

hundred mile front from Arnhem to Metz.

The stalemate in France and the Low Countries was paralleled in Italy. Helped as before by the Allies' failure to use their maritime resources to exploit their Mediterranean strategy, the Germans were contesting every rocky coign and watercourse in order to tie down the attackers and prevent any move across the Adriatic to cut off the Hungarian bauxite on which their aircraft industry depended. Because of Eisenhower's difficulties, no reinforcements could be sent to Alexander.

"All of us," Roosevelt wrote to Churchill on October 16, "are now faced with an unanticipated shortage of manpower, and overshadowing all other military problems is the need for quick provision of fresh troops to reinforce Eisenhower in his battle to break into Germany and end the European war."

On October 25, after fighting its way half-way from Rimini to Bologna, the Eighth Army was halted by torrential rains.

These events and the problems they raised were mirrored in Brooke's diary after his return from Moscow and the resumption of his normal routine, as a weary Britain entered upon her sixth winter of war.

"October 26. We had the Planners in this morning and discussed with them the wonderful telegram from Marshall, in which he seems to consider that if we really set our hearts on it and bank on its happening, irrespective of what happens in the future should we fail to do so, we ought to be able to finish the war before the end of the year!

"October 31. We were concerned with the intended bombing of defences near Flushing, P.M. objecting from humanitarian reasons and Ike pressing for it to save casualties in the infantry attack—P.M. agreed.

"November 2. Lunch with P.M. at 10 Downing Street to meet Bedell Smith. Found out that Ike's plan as usual entails attacking all along the front instead of selecting main strategic point. I fear that the November attack will consequently get no farther than the Rhine at the most.

"P.M. not in his usual form and on the flat side. However, his fighting spirit the same as usual and he said that if he was a German he would get his small daughter to put a bomb under some British bed; he would instruct his wife to wait till some American was bending over his basin washing to strike him on the neck with a chopper, whilst he himself sniped at Americans and British indiscriminately!

"November 3. Sent for by the P.M. at 10.45 a.m. He told me that he had been thinking over the desirability of replacing Dill now that he would be unable to carry on. It was only yesterday at lunch that he had stated that it was unnecessary to replace him, and we had all remonstrated with him. His suggestion now is to send 'Jumbo' Wilson there and to relieve him with Alexander, whilst Clark should relieve Alexander. It is probably the best solution, but will all depend on how 'Jumbo' hits it off with Marshall. Last year in Cairo Marshall had a good opinion of him.

"I then tackled the P.M. on the question of making 'Jumbo' a field marshal. He refused at first and said it was quite unnecessary; however, by working away at him I got him to agree and only hope he does not go back again.

"In the evening again sent for by the P.M., this time to discuss his proposed visit to France. He is to start on the tenth, attend Armistice ceremony in Paris, then fly to Besançon to visit French forces under de Lattre de Tassigny. From there to visit Ike and Monty. He wants me to come with him, which will be great fun and very interesting.

"The only bad part is the security side; the French have already announced his visit, and there might well be remnants of Germans or Vichy representatives who would be only too ready to take advantage of a chance to have a shot at Winston.

"November 7. Started our C.O.S. meeting with a wire Winston wished to send to the President in which he proposed that Wilson should take Dill's place in Washington and that Alexander should take over from Wilson. Unfortunately he went on to suggest Alexander should combine the duties of Supreme Commander and his own present ones at the same time. He went further to suggest that Greece should return to Middle East where we have just taken it from, and in every possible way proposed upsetting the organization of Command in the Mediterranean.

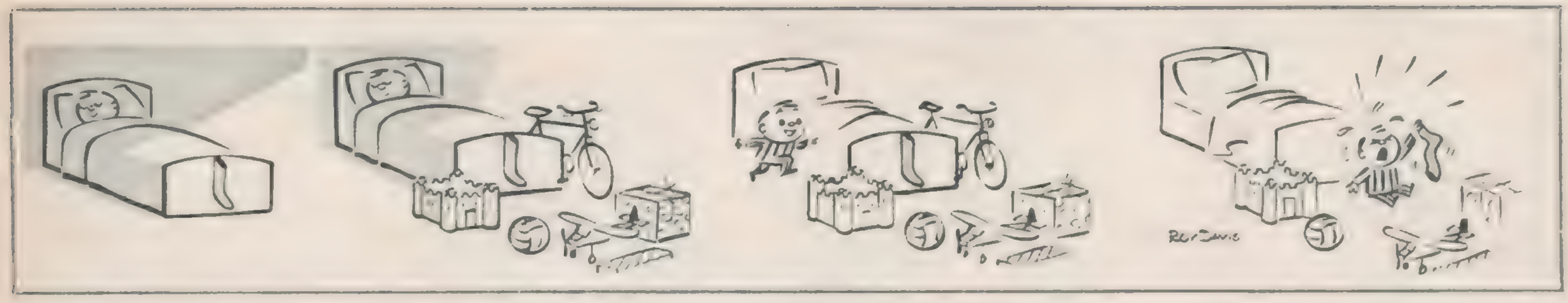
Monty's criticisms

"Monty came to lunch with me, in very good form but full of criticism of Ike and of his methods of running a war.

"Later. Just back (1 a.m.) from our meeting with the P.M., Anthony Eden attending. As I had suspected, he was responsible for the change in the P.M.'s plans. He had just come back from Italy where he had been seeing Alexander. As a result he had recommended combining the Supreme Commander and Army Group Commander into one, and wanted, in fact, to commit the error which Eisenhower has just made in France.

"We had a long discussion, luckily quite a pleasant one and not too heated. After much arguing I made my point, namely Wilson to replace Dill, Alex to replace Wilson, and Clark to replace Alex. It is not ideal, but it is the best that can be made of a very complicated problem with many personal factors. Anthony Eden behaved well and did not press his point.

"November 8. I had an interview with Joubert de la Ferte and he gave



Triumph in the west

continued from previous page

me some interesting sidelights on Mountbatten's H.Q. He said that the Anglo-American relations continued to be bad.

"November 9. During the afternoon I had a talk with Monty before he returns to France. He still goes on harping over the system of command in France and the fact that the war is being prolonged. I agree that the set-up is bad, but it is not one which can be easily altered, as the Americans naturally consider they should have a major say. Perhaps, after they see the results of dispersing their strength all along their front it may become easier to convince them that some drastic change is desirable, leading to a concentration of force at the vital point. . . .

"All the preparations for Paris are made; if fine we fly, if not we go by destroyer, and I pray to heaven we may not have to go in the destroyer! The Channel is very rough at present.

"November 10. Paris! After spending a usual morning and attending the C.O.S. meeting I had an early lunch and left for Northolt aerodrome where our party assembled ready to embark in two Dakotas for Paris. The party consisted of P.M., Anthony Eden, Mrs. Churchill and Mary, 'Pug' Ismay, Cadogan, etc. We had an excellent flight and arrived at 4.30 p.m. just south of Paris.

Laid a wreath

"With a long procession of cars we drove through Paris with streets lined on either side. We went to the Quai d'Orsay where Winston is stopping. There we deposited him and drove on to the Continental Hotel, Juin's H.Q., where I am putting up. The hotel as such is closed. In my room I found a set of the most priceless bird books which had been drawn out of the Natural History Museum Library for me to look at! Juin had asked Archdale of the Mission here if there was anything I might care for in my room to entertain me, and he had suggested bird books, knowing me well. They are quite lovely and most of them original drawings.

"November 11. At 10 a.m. General Juin's A.D.C. came to collect me, and we started off for the great function of the day. We drove to the Arc de Triomphe where we waited for the P.M. and de Gaulle. When they arrived they went up together to lay a wreath on the unknown soldier's grave and for de Gaulle to relight the perpetual flame.

"De Gaulle then presented medals to a group of officers. After that we marched on foot down the Champs-Élysées to a stand which had been put up. As no places had been marked, and half of them were already occupied, there was some scramble to get accommodated. There were the usual very futile agents quite incapable of handling the crowd, especially press photographers. The security side was appalling and I had some uneasy feelings for Winston at times.

"He had a wonderful reception, and the Paris crowd went quite mad over him, with continuous cries of: 'Churcheel! Churcheel!'

"November 12. Finished the day by dining with Koenig, who had two generals dining who had taken a great part in the Resistance movement. They were most interesting about their experiences and lives led under a dozen names and carried on from dozens of residences. Four months was the most that the majority survived before getting caught by the Gestapo.

"Finally I drove to the Gare de Lyon where we embarked in the Presidential train for Besançon. A very comfortable train in which I have an excellent cabin, but the line is very rough, hence my bad writing."

Subsequently, Alanbrooke commented:

"I was very interested to meet the Resistance generals and to hear their views on de Gaulle. They did not think much of the part he had played. One of them said to me: 'De Gaulle! What did he do? Evacuated his family to London from the start, where he followed them. There he lived comfortably throughout the war, whilst we were risking our lives daily in contact with the Germans, living in the cellars with them overhead and expecting daily to be apprehended by the Gestapo. Meanwhile from his safe position he had the impertinence to say: *"Je suis la France!"*' They were very bitter and had little use for him.

'November 13. Woke to find the whole country we were travelling through covered with snow. And a grey morning with snow falling fast.

"We arrived in Besançon well up to schedule by 10 a.m."

"As we arrived in the station, which was filled with generals, bands, guards of honour and dignitaries of every description," wrote Alanbrooke after the war, "Winston was expected to alight from the train gracefully. However, at this moment Winston was still only half-dressed, and as he completed his toilet, a process that lasted a full quarter of an hour, General de Lattre and all his comrades were rapidly being converted into Father Xmases!

"Finally Winston emerged in the dining-carriage dressed as an airman. There Sawyers, his valet, proceeded to adjust his coat whilst he admired the general effect in the glass. At the correct moment Sawyers handed him from behind the two ends of the belt.

"This produced a thunderstorm of abuse: 'Sawyers, you damned fool, why have you not removed that bastard! You know I never want that bastard round me again! Cut off the damned thing!' Mary was standing beside me at the door that led into the corridor and, not knowing what further language the paternal anger might produce, withdrew gracefully down the corridor with a smile.

"Finally and at last Winston was ready and he stepped into the snow with a smile on his face, large cigar, and his coat no longer adorned by that 'bastard thing.' "

Alanbrooke's diary for November 13 goes on:

"We then started off in cars, leading car P.M., de Gaulle, de Lattre and Mary; next came General Juin, 'Barney' and self. We had a long drive of some sixty miles in the snow to a place called Maiche, where de Lattre had his Advanced H.Q.

"The P.M.'s car punctured twice and we got temporarily stuck in the rut at the side of the road. However, we finally arrived at Maiche. The P.M. was very cold and miserable-looking and I hope will not be any the worse for it.

"On arrival we were given, by de Lattre, a description of the front held by the First French Army. The whole plan of attack struck me as being fantastic.

"It is another case of Eisenhower's complete inability to run the land battle as well as acting as Supreme Commander. Furthermore it is another example of the American doctrine of attacking all along the line. The American Army just north of de Lattre is attacking in an impossible country in the Vosges; all he will do there is lose men. He ought to establish a defensive front there and concentrate his forces on the Belfort gap. The French realize these errors only too well and are fretting at being subjected to their results.

Inspiring Legion

"After lunch we started driving back in the snow with darkness coming on. But on the way home we had to visit a training camp where new Maquis recruits are being turned into reserves. We also saw a battalion of the 'Legion' which marched past. A most impressive sight. Winston looked frozen, and I pray heaven that he will not be any the worse for it.

"At 7 p.m. we rejoined the train, having been nine hours on the go in cold and snow, and very glad to get back to the warmth of the train.

"Throughout the day de Gaulle was most affable and pleasant, but I very much doubt whether he has the personality to unite France for concerted action at this critical time."

In later years Alanbrooke commented:

"Of all the sights that day the one that remained most rooted in my mind was the march past of that Foreign Legion battalion.

"They had their own band and out of the darkness came the wildest strains of a march, played on some weird sort of pipes, which transported one to North Africa. Then out of the fast-failing light and through the falling snowflakes came a sight I shall never forget. The grandest assembly of real fighting men that I have ever seen, marching with their heads up as if they owned the world, lean, hard-looking men, carrying their arms admirably and marching with perfect precision. They disappeared into the darkness leaving me with a thrill and a desire for a division of such men.

"One other incident that day that left a mark in my mind was Winston at lunch. He arrived completely frozen and almost rolled upon himself like a hedgehog. He was placed in a chair with a hot-water bottle at his feet and one in the back of his chair; at the same time good brandy was poured down his throat to warm him internally. The results were wonderful, he thawed out rapidly and when the time came produced one of those indescribably funny French speeches which brought the house down."

"November 14. The train left Besançon shortly after we got into it and travelled throughout the night to Paris where it arrived about 6 a.m. Then the coaches with de Gaulle, Juin and the Ministers were cut off and we went on to Rheims. We arrived at 11 a.m. and were met by Ike, who drove us out to his camp situated on the golf links built by the big champagne merchants. He went over the dispositions on the front and seemed fairly vague as to what was really going on.

"We had lunch with him and then drove to the aerodrome where we took off at 3 p.m. for Northolt, which we reached at 4.45 p.m. after a very comfortable flight. It was a relief to get the P.M. safely back from his trip, and I have now got a much clearer idea of the situation as regards developing French forces.

"November 17. We found at the morning Chiefs of Staff meeting that Winston was still confused about the system of command in Italy and the Mediterranean. Having tried hard to warp the whole organization while Wilson was Supreme Commander and Alex commanding the group of armies so as to try and put Wilson in the shade for the benefit of Alexander, now that he places Alexander as Supreme Commander he is frightened lest his powers should be restricted in the manner he has endeavoured to reduce those of Wilson!

"We had to meet at 4 p.m. and after laborious explanations I at last got him to accept matters as they are. . . .

"November 20. Fairly long C.O.S. meeting with several postwar problems. Also a discussion as to the unsatisfactory state of affairs in France, where Eisenhower completely fails as Commander. Bedell Smith lives back in Paris quite out of touch; as a result the war is drifting in a rudderless condition.

"Had a long and despondent letter about it from Montgomery over the weekend. Am preparing a case, as we shall have to take it up with the Americans before long. . . ."

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***NEXT WEEK:** Disaster strikes our armies—with victory in sight*

Answers to
Everybody's Puzzling
See page 22

FRED BORDERS'S BRAIN TEASER

The odd ½d. in the price of the sultanas means that Mary must have bought these in lots of four, for there is no odd ½d. in the total bill. Four packets would have cost 8s. 1d. and eight packets 16s. 2d. This last amount would have left 3s. 10d. for currants and raisins, which would not have been possible. Mary, then, must have bought four packets of sultanas. This leaves 11s. 11d., or 143d., to buy the remaining ingredients. Currants cost 15d. per packet, so an even number of packets would have cost a number of pence ending in 0, and an odd number of packets a number of pence ending in 5. These end figures respectively leave a number of pence for raisins ending in 3 or 8. Raisins cost 17d., so the number of packets must have been four or nine. But nine packets would have cost 153d., which is more than the 143d. left. Thus there could have been only four packets of raisins costing 68d., leaving 75d. for currants—a sum which would have bought just five packets.

QUIZZLE

Quotation: One crowded hour of glorious life

Is worth an age without a name. (Thos. Osbert Mordaunt.)

Clue Down: The customer is always right.

Clues Across: (A) Trounce; (B) Helicopter; (C) Endow; (D) Caddie; (E) Urdu; (F) Siphon; (G) Tudor rose; (H) Offing; (I) Mullion; (J) Erica; (K) Rostrum; (L) Insulin; (M) Serf; (N) Atelier; (O) Leastways; (P) Worsted; (Q) Athenian; (R) Yarn; (S) Shingle; (T) Renewing; (U) Isthmus; (V) Gourmet; (W) Havana; (X) Thyme.

Too many ghosts

continued from page 12

Priory neighbouring the Hall, and now in ruins—the wicked Lord Paradine had been unable to forget her.

The upshot was he kidnapped her from the convent and detained her forcibly at the Hall. To acquaint her former lover with her whereabouts, the unhappy woman played their favourite air when they had been lovers, "My Bonnie Dear," on her harp at the window of the room where she was confined. Rescue, however, came too late; she and her unborn child were murdered. Nor was any trace of her remains ever found.

After studying the details of the calamities that followed the appearance of the nun in various successive generations—this Paradine killed in the wars, that one lost at sea, another via the executioner—Hero felt inclined to have a look at the ruins of the nunnery. He decided to ask Susan Marshall to accompany him; he wanted to hear her own version of the attack made on her.

OUTSIDE he found himself suddenly encountering Mrs. Wilson, who, with her husband, was a country club guest. She gave a little startled cry and said: "Oh! Mr. Hero." He had the feeling somehow that she had stepped out to meet him at just the right moment.

He noted how attractive she was, in spite of a kind of angularity, trim, fastidious and beautifully groomed.

She asked, a little breathlessly: "Were you serious at dinner when you said there might be danger, Mr. Hero? I have come here with my husband for a rest, and I don't mind confessing that I have been considerably upset by some of the things that have been happening. Howard—my husband—only scoffs at it all, but of course he sleeps through anything at night."

"I don't think you need worry or make yourself uneasy," Hero said.

Mrs. Wilson nodded, and then said: "If I am nervous during the night—or think I have seen or heard anything—may I . . . ?" She regarded him with pale, luminous, hungry eyes, and the faintest of cat smiles.

Hero regarded her steadily. "Please don't hesitate," he said.

Mrs. Wilson replied: "Thank you. You have relieved my mind."

They walked on out of the main entrance without any further speech. When they came upon Susan Marshall sitting with Beth, Hero said: "You're the one I'm looking for, young lady. Come along for a walk with me—I'm going to do a spot of archaeologing, and want to show off."

Susan sighed. "Oh dear! Beth and I were just tearing the fall styles to pieces." But she rose to join him.

Mrs. Wilson gave them a bright smile as they walked off through the park in the direction of the ruins of Wytrim Priory. Hero was suddenly aware that, in the presence of Susan, Vivyan Wilson's smile and its promise were no longer as attractive as a moment before.

He felt annoyed with himself. He was quite sensible of the fact that his weakness was women, and that, with Susan Marshall apparently at the storm centre of the manifestations that crowded the Hall, this was one entanglement he must avoid at all costs; yet he knew that he was heading for it in almost the same straight line that Mrs. Wilson had taken to him.

HERO looked at the ruin appraisingly, pulling at his lower lip. "It's a jumble," he said, "isn't it? There've been at least three additions since the original. Destroyed by fire, too." He wandered about a bit, and then said: "Not very ghostly, is it? We ought to feel depressed, oppressed and filled with some nameless dread, and all that sort of hogwash. By the way, everything quiet in your sector last night?"

"Yes. The bolt is very comforting."

Hero said curiously: "Is it? Why?"

Susan replied seriously: "Because I'm not afraid of ghosts."

Hero said: "Ah." And then: "I rather wish you were a little. There are times, apparently, when they are things to be afraid of."

Susan looked up at him with some surprise, and seemed about to say something, but then thought better of it. After a moment she asked: "Is there a ghost here?"

"A ghost?" said Hero. "I should say rather ghosts—a plurality of them. For my taste, far, far too many."

"I don't quite understand. What exactly do you mean?"

"That they rather want sorting out. That's one of the jobs I am on now." He walked over to one of the archways and examined it, and then turned back to the girl. "What about that funny business in your room that night?"

Susan sighed deeply. She told him what had happened as she recalled it, step by step. Hero was silent for a few moments. Then he said: "The hand at your throat, was it really cold, then?"

"Yes—freezing, dead cold, and . . . clammy is the word I would want to use, even though. . . ."

"It is probably the right word," Hero commented. "Now what did you think when you looked in the mirror and saw the moist spots at your throat?"

"That it might have been perspiration. I was drenched with sweat by that time."

Hero said: "Then you found the door unlocked and looked into the hall and there was no one there, and you went back to bed. What were you thinking?"

"Trying to remember how it all happened, step by step. I didn't like it, got a book and read awhile. Then I went back to sleep. Could it have been a dream after all?"

Hero said: "I don't think so." He went to her and took her two hands and held them tightly, saying: "Lord, Susan, but you're a girl of courage!"

For an instant, as they looked into one another's eyes, something trembled between them and could have been born, would have been born that instant in his arms perhaps, but for her odd feeling that there was something else behind his sudden show of emotion. And the next thing he said seemed almost a substantiation. If nothing else, it served to destroy the dangerous mood that seemed to have gripped them both.

"If you had to," he said, "would you be able to go through the whole thing again—but without the danger?"

She asked: "Would that be necessary?"

He said: "If I said so, it would be."

Once more she felt his unemotional single-mindedness. He was on the trail of something more important than herself.

"I suppose so," she said, suddenly listless.

"Good girl!" he applauded, but his mind was a million miles away.

Silently they walked back to the Hall together, where Mark Paradine was waiting on the terrace.

The red-haired young man watched warily as Susan and Hero approached, for they had not really spoken a great deal since their quarrel. He wondered at the curious silence of both of them.

As they reached him, he said carelessly and tentatively: "Care for a game of tennis, Susan?" and was astonished at the almost overwhelming enthusiasm of her reply.

"Why, how nice!" she said. "I'd love to, Mark. I'll go and change."

The two men stood watching her go. Hero said unenthusiastically to Mark: "Quid she beats you, she's in the mood." And then he drifted off to find Lady Paradine, but on his way he was captured by Horace Spendley-Carter, the big blustery M.P. who was a country club guest.

DRINKING—4

A hot drink is as good as an overcoat.

Petronius

"Ah-ha," shouted Spendley-Carter, "our spook-sleuth on the trail, eh?"

Hero said: "Yes." Then he asked: "How is Mrs. Spendley-Carter?"

Spendley-Carter shouted: "Oh, Sylvia? She'll be all right. Suppose you're wondering why I don't take her away. Only get one holiday a year, old man. No point in having it spoiled by a lot of hysterical women, what! Besides which it's a great opportunity. The newspapers will be wanting interviews and articles from me when I put them on to this. I was wondering whether I could ask you to lend me a hand, since you're supposed to know all about such things."

"Do you realize," Hero said, "that if word of these unpleasant happenings and hauntings reaches the newspapers, or even becomes common gossip, the Paradine Country Club will be ruined? Lord Paradine would lose the Hall."

SPENDLEY-CARTER was regarding Hero with considerable disfavour. "Bad luck is what I say, old man. When you operate an hotel, it's your business to see that things like this don't happen—stones and vegetables flying about, things creeping about in the corridors knocking and thumping and frightening the life out of the women. Why, that grocer fellow Jellicot tells me that with my name on them testifying, the articles will have a world circulation."

"I shouldn't put too much weight on what Mr. Jellicot says," Hero remarked, "or on the phenomena either, until I have been able to test them properly. And until such time, if I were you, I would not be getting in touch with any newspapers."

"And why not, sir, if I may ask?"

Hero turned his intense gaze upon the big man, and his expression might almost have been said to have been friendly. "I was really only thinking of you, sir," he said. "You asked if I would be of assistance to you. I should be glad to, since most of the time in the occult world things are not at all what they seem. There have even been cases recorded where ghosts have taken a violent dislike to publicity in any form. In the meantime, the next time you find yourself in the presence of manifestations of any kind, I should be obliged if you would send for me immediately. I have enjoyed the little chat."

He walked away down the corridor, leaving Spendley-Carter confused and no longer sure of himself, standing there muttering. Hero felt reasonably sure he had put the wind up the man.

WHEN the butler announced Hero, Lady Paradine was in her writing-room on the ground floor of the west wing, answering letters. She did not look up when he entered, but finished her sentence first; then she turned to him, removing her reading glasses as she did so, and saying: "Oh dear, it's such a bore not having a secretary."

Hero scrutinized briefly the faded, handsome face, and wondered what was concealed behind the façade of weariness and boredom. He said: "I hope I haven't disturbed you."

"I suppose you'll be wanting to ask me a great many questions," Lady Paradine said. "I'm afraid I really don't know anything at all. Of course I'm terribly upset for poor Susan, I'm surprised she hasn't left. I know I should have been perfectly terrified if any of it had happened to me. I mean, nobody could make me stay for another second in a house where dead rabbits appeared upon my plate. Would you?"

Hero reflected upon this somewhat breathless and inconsequent speech, and then said gravely: "It all depends, of course, what kind of person one is, and how much one wants to stay. Perhaps Miss Marshall has reasons for wishing to remain here. She is a courageous girl, and when her mind is made up it is not easily to be bluffed, I should say."

Lady Paradine seemed to stiffen slightly. "Yes, I'm sure," she said. "But it's perfectly dreadful to have such a thing happen to a guest, isn't it?" She glanced down at the letter she had been writing, and then back to Hero. "Of course, Mark's so young, you know, hardly more than a boy—and Susan is quite good-looking. Americans seem so self-sufficient and able to cope. Almost frightening in a woman, isn't it? I hate efficiency." And then she added as an afterthought: "I suppose it's because I am so inefficient."

Hero thought to himself, *So that's how it goes.* Aloud he said: "Yes, I suppose it can be upsetting. However, I don't really wish to disturb you with questions. What I came to ask was

MAN ABOUT THE HOUSE

"All I can think of at the moment is a new toast rack"

Too many ghosts

continued from previous page

whether I could impose upon you to invite my sister Meg here for a visit."

Lady Paradine chilled perceptibly. "Your sister, Mr. Hero?" she said. "I don't think I quite understand. Perhaps my husband would. . . ."

"The Lady Margaret Callandar," Hero said smoothly. "The Earl of Heth's daughter. She is really my stepsister. She assists me in my work."

"Oh!" said Lady Paradine in a manner which showed Hero he was on target. "Lady Margaret! But she's famous, isn't she? And your mother, then, is the Countess of Heth, I hadn't realized. Certainly, I'll ask her at once." She gestured towards a fresh sheet of stationery, and suddenly hesitated with a kind of pout. "Oh dear," she said, "I shall have to ask my sister-in-law—Isobel's the only one who really knows everything about the Hall and which rooms are ready. I mean, she's one of those efficient persons, and I don't know what we'd do without her. Whenever anybody wants anything they go to Isobel. I simply couldn't cope with everything the way she does. Poor thing, I suppose she ought to, with no husband and nothing else to do, and she's been doing it for donkey's years now—or am I being catty?"

At that moment Isobel came into the room without the ceremony of knocking. Her silvery hair was pulled back tightly, but several untidy strands had escaped and blew about her brow, on which there was a smudge. Her hands were stained. She was wearing an old pair of jodhpurs and a linen blouse.

"Oh dear," she said, "I didn't know there was anyone here. I'm such a mess. I've been working in my shop."

Hero could not contain his surprise.

"Spinster hobby," Isobel explained. "Some collect budgerigars, but I like carpentry; and besides, it gets things done about the house."

"Darling," said Lady Paradine, "I'm being a bitch. I've been telling Mr. Hero how wonderful you are, and how helpless I am, hoping it will make him like me more."

Isobel said: "Dear, aren't we all? Wait until I get Mr. Hero to myself. I'm sorry to interrupt, but I've had such a time about the conservatory window. The wretched men have brought the new sheet of glass, but now they say it can't be installed until next week, something to do with a fitting. They have just leaned the new one there temporarily, but I think we ought to mark the conservatory out of bounds until then, don't you?"

Lady Paradine said listlessly: "Yes, I suppose so," and then suddenly and unaccountably flared. "Oh, why do you try to pretend, Isobel, just because someone happens to be here, that it isn't you who has everything to say about the running of this house? You do what you like, anyway, and I stopped caring ages ago, so why pretend?"

Isobel said quietly: "Don't you think, Enid . . . ?"

"That I oughtn't to air family rows in front of strangers?" Lady Paradine said bitterly. "Of course I ought not to, but I get so sick of pretending. Do as you wish."

"Very well, Enid," said Isobel mildly. "I don't suppose it really matters."

Lady Paradine let herself appear mollified and more quietly she said: "I am inviting Mr. Hero's stepsister, Lady Margaret Callandar, to stay, but I've told him you know more about what rooms are in order than I do."

Isobel, who seemed not in the least disturbed by Lady Paradine's outburst, said almost with pleasure: "Oh, Meg Callandar, I didn't know she was your sister. She came here once with the Earl, when my father was still alive. I should be so pleased to see her again. I remember her—she was all legs and eyes and mouth. Of course she's grown up into a great beauty."

"Well, well! Remember that charming young couple we met in Norway, darling . . . ?"

Hero looked his surprise. To him Meg was simply Meg.

Isobel went on: "How very delightful. The Charles suite can be made ready almost at once."

Lady Paradine made a gesture which included *There-you-see-didn't-I-tell-you?* and also dismissal, and returned to her correspondence. Hero found himself outside the room with Isobel.

"Would you like to see the rooms which your sister . . . ?" Isobel began.

Hero said: "No, thank you. But I should like to see yours, if I might, and perhaps the room where the harp plays."

They went together into the pleasant, sunny room, where the golden concert harp gleamed in its accustomed place over by the window that looked out on to the placid surface of the River Stoke.

Hero said: "I've been here before, with Miss Marshall, but there were some things I wanted to ask you."

The room appeared unchanged since he had visited it with Susan. His statement seemed to call for no reply from Isobel, and she made none. She watched Hero silently as he rocked the harp on its base, sat in the chair and pulled it to him in the manner of a harpist, tested the tuning keys, the strings, the pedals, thumped the frame, and then stood looking at it puzzled. There was nothing at all either unusual or wrong about the harp.

Isobel said: "I can see that we have two different points of view, Mr. Hero; yours that the harp was somehow played by human hands, and mine that —it wasn't."

"You are wrong there, Miss Paradine," Hero said. "When I am engaged on an investigation I have no point of view whatsoever beyond what is suggested by the evidence. The evidence in this case is that this is a first-class harp, with no indication that it has been tampered with in any way. Unless someone managed to enter this room, sit at it and pluck the strings, it ought not to have played."

Isobel sighed, nodded, and then said gravely: "And yet it did."

"Will you tell me about it, please?"

Isobel's smile contained some of that patient gentleness of the sheltered and well-born when they encounter cynicism and suspicion. She said: "It was during the night. I heard the harp play—I could not imagine. . . ."

"Where were you at the time?"

"In my room."

"Did the music awaken you?"

"I was awake—I have not slept very well since that night when. . . ."

Hero nodded sympathetically. "I see. Was your door open or shut?"

A faint frown momentarily passed over the smooth front of Isobel's brow. She said: "Shut—no, open. No, I'm sorry, I just don't remember."

"Did you recognize the melody?"

"Yes. My mother used to play it."

"Did you think perhaps it might have been . . . your mother . . . returned?"

"No. I only lay there quite cold with horror, thinking of the nun, the harp, and the doom that lies upon the Paradines when the two come together."

Hero was surprised: a dramatic and norn-like quality had suddenly displaced the matter-of-fact housekeeper.

"Misfortune pursues those to whom the nun appears," she continued. "There is misfortune upon this house."

Hero thought to himself, *And, apparently, upon its house guests.* Was she sincere, or was it an act? Aloud he said: "You believe this, don't you?"

Isobel's gaze was direct and without guile. "Yes," she said with a kind of simplicity, "I am a Paradine."

Hero returned to the thread of her narrative. "You lay there and listened. What happened then?"

"I heard my brother shout: 'Enid! Enid! This damned door is locked, fetch me your keys.' "

"Was the room usually locked?"

"Sometimes—particularly if there were children in the house. We don't like them coming in. But my recollection is that this time it was not. The tuner had just been. When I heard John calling for the keys, I got up and went to the door and listened. The harp was still playing. I then went down into the pantry to fetch my keys in case Enid should not be able to find hers—she has duplicates, you know."

"But why the pantry?"

"I remembered I had left them there the night before."

Hero nodded. "But she arrived first?"

"Yes. When I got here, the door was open. Enid and my brother were

EVERYBODY'S CROSSWORD (No. 7)

by Leslie Stokes

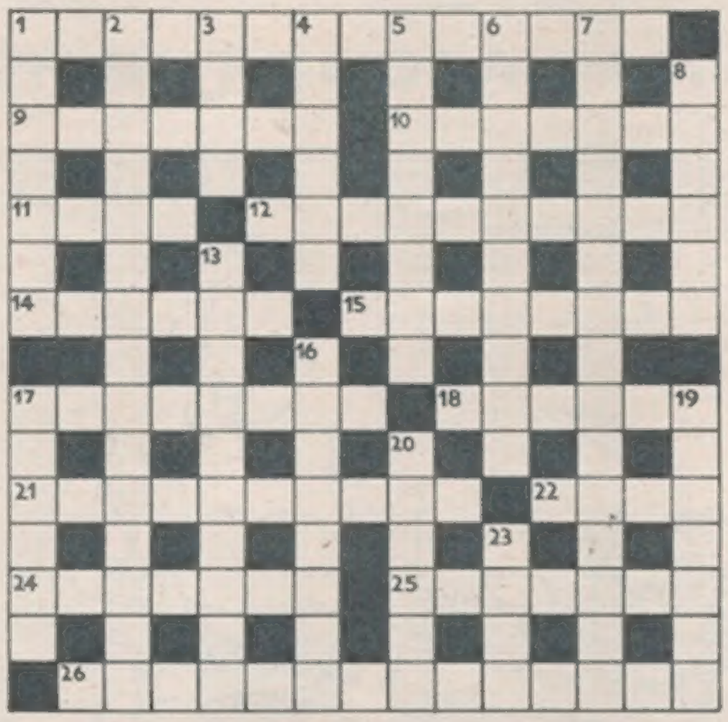
A prize of a one-guinea Book Token will be given for each of the first three correct solutions opened. Entries must be marked "Crossword No. 7" on the envelope and must be posted to reach this office (John Bull: Everybody's Weekly, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1) by Tuesday, December 29. No correspondence can be entered into about this puzzle.

ACROSS

1. Spirit of the "Top Ten"? (9, 5)
9. Ann fell for this material. (7)
10. They're naturally wild, not being members of the famous Club? (7)
11, 12. Weakness of the glutton, for instance. (4-10)
14. Is long, in a way, on the road to defeat. (6)
15. Throw overboard. (8)
17. Just the vessel for a long drink. (8)
18. A hazy perception about the sun. (6)
21. Such impudence is confounded by entry of ref. (10)
22. Responsibility—and where it lies, apparently. (4)
24. It's vile—but proceed, as we say. (7)
25. Hold up, putting us in the 26 mark. (7)
26. Could it mean the industry is above reproach? (9, 5)

DOWN

1. Rejection from fur sale. (7)
2. Son of the "wisest fool in Christendom." (7, 3, 5)
3. Hurried with a penny in S. Africa. (4)
4. Not near the Strand, by the sound of it. (6)
5. Actions that sometimes speak louder than words. (8)
6. For your guidance, it's a science. (10)
7. Event that isn't the same, once Grandpa goes haywire. (3-3-5, 4)
8. A grim word to cover a backward movement. (6)
13. The trouble of advanced old age, it is said. (4, 6)
16. Lone guard. (8)
17. Power almost all command but few can make in public. (6)
19. Club with a ready-made magazine. (7)
20. Give a little credit to 23; it's the turning point. (6)
23. River of double existence. (4)



SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD No. 3

ACROSS: 1, *Globe-trotter.* 9, *Breathe.* 10, *Cold war.* 11, *Intermix.* 12, *Snares.* 14, *Gore.* 15, *Animosity.* 18, *Inversely.* 19, *Vega.* 22, *Rector.* 23, *Engineer.* 25, *Swinish.* 26, *Inshore.* 27, *Advance guard.*
DOWN: 1, *Great-grandchild.* 2, *Outcry.* 3, *Eye-witness.* 4, *Rice.* 5, *Tallness.* 6, *Edward the second.* 7, *Abridge.* 8, 17, *Crush barrier.* 13, *Implanting.* 16, *Semolina.* 20, *Brash.* 21, *Siesta.* 24, *Chic.*

THE WINNERS WERE

Mrs. R. Read, 79a Rockley Rd., Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset.
Mr. A. E. Dennett, H.M. Coastguard, Mumbles, Swansea, Glam.
Mrs. M. M. Carter, 19 Hookstone Chase, Harrogate, Yorks.

Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to John Bull : Everybody's Weekly Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page

We advise . . .

MY son of twelve was playing football in a sports field when his football was accidentally kicked into a neighbour's garden. No damage was done, but the neighbour refuses to return the ball. What is the legal position?—M. K., Liverpool.

● The boy would be entitled to follow his ball and retrieve it, provided he did no damage. If the neighbour picked up the ball she can be compelled to hand it over on demand. Should she refuse to do so without reason, she may be guilty of theft.

BELT GONE WRONG

AFTER buying a new dress the belt tore the first time I wore it. The shop from which I bought it will not repair it free. They say it is my fault. Must I pay a repairs charge?—Mrs. M. B., Ilkeston, Derbyshire.

● If the belt tore because of bad workmanship the vendor should have accepted the responsibility and repaired it without charge.

If, however, you merely tore it by accident the shop would be entitled to charge you for the repairs.

DOGS FROM THE ISLES

ARE there any quarantine regulations covering the travel of dogs between this country and the Channel Isles?—E. B., Swindon, Wilts.

● For dogs which are kept permanently in either this country or the Channel Isles, there are no quarantine regulations. Dogs which have not resided for any length of time in either place are subject to the usual regulations.

CAN COAL BE CARRIED?

IS it true that stocks of coal cannot be moved from one house to another? We are moving and I want to take a fairly large quantity of coal with us.—Miss L. D., Blandford Forum, Dorset.

● It was illegal to move coal from one house to another while it was only possible to obtain coal from a dealer with whom one was registered.

Now that registration is no longer required there seems no reason why the coal should not be moved.

SCOOTER HELD UP

I PURCHASED a motor scooter from a dealer and after frequent breakdowns returned it for repairs. The bill was considerable and I asked the dealer for a trial of the machine before I paid. He refused. Can he legally keep the scooter like this? — B. H., Cumberworth, nr. Huddersfield.

● The repairer is entitled to refuse to hand over the machine until the charges are paid, but it is only reasonable that he should permit you to try it out to find out whether the repairs are satisfactory.

If he continues to refuse this, you should pay him, with a written proviso that the machine had not been tested by you.

Should the repairs afterwards prove unsatisfactory you will have a remedy against him in law.

CAME AT OWN RISK

MY son flew home from East Africa on hearing of the sudden death of a relative, hoping that he, being the only male relation, would be of some assistance, which he was. The executor says now that as he came of his own accord no refund out of the estate can be made to cover the cost of his journey. Is he right?—Mrs. G. V. L., Musselburgh, Midlothian.

● In these circumstances your son undertook the journey at his own risk and he cannot claim the cost from the dead person's estate.

RELIEF FOR REPAIRS

I AM owner-occupier of a house and would like to know how to claim income tax relief on property repairs.—A. S., Unstone, nr. Sheffield.

● Claims should be made on Form No. 99, obtainable from the Inspector of Taxes.

Relief is based on the average cost over the five preceding years, but expenditure on structural alterations and improvements must be left out.

TOO LATE FOR CLAIM

WE had a new geyser installed in our bathroom and also a new kitchen sink unit. I was told by a friend that I can claim some of the cost of this work as it comes under modernizing the house. Is this so?—G. V. S., Holbrooks, Coventry.

● It is not permissible to make a claim for the improvement grant after the work has been started.

The regulations lay down that proposals must be submitted and approved by the local authority before the work is undertaken.

LEGAL AID A MUST

IS it always necessary to engage a solicitor when selling a house? I bought my present property with the help of one—but now, wishing to sell it, I do not think it is really essential—all the legal business seems to concern the buyer.—H. S., Bitterne, Southampton.

● Before you can sell your house you need a solicitor to deduce your title to the buyer—which means that you have to show you have a proper title to sell. You could not do this without legal help.

The buyer pays his own legal costs for the conveyance, etc., but you could agree with him as a condition of sale that he also pays your costs.

WHO PAYS FOR THEFT?

EMPLOYED as a supervisor at a petrol station, I am left with only one assistant in the evenings. Recently some oil was stolen—and the cost was deducted from my pay. I was not told when I started the job that I would be responsible for losses in this way. I wonder how far my liability extends.—A. C., London, E.8.

● You have a legal responsibility to take all reasonable care of your employer's goods, but you could not be held liable for any loss unless caused through your negligence.

The only exception to this would be if it were a condition of your employment that you would be held liable.

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS keeps practical homelovers up to date

Kitchen canisters : Keep dry stores in canisters which help to decorate your kitchen. Made of unbreakable, rigid plastic, a set of four 2 lb. Plexene containers costs 11s. 6d. The push-on lids are available in a colour choice of red, yellow, blue or turquoise.

Six self-adhesive labels are supplied, marked tea, sugar, cocoa, coffee, rice and flour, any four of which can be chosen. By Hermes Supply Co. (London), Ltd., 78 Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1.

Waterproof torch : Don't grope your way in the rain to the coal-shed. Use the new waterproof, dust-proof B.M. torch instead. Exhaustive tests given to the new torch include switching on and off 500,000 times under water, submerging in 40 ft. of salt water for seven days, and deep-freezing for forty-eight hours at minus 20° F. As a result this torch is proved to be unaffected by water, gas, dust, ice or mud.

The secret of its success lies in the use of non-corrosive, rustproof materials, and in the switch gear which is housed within the head of the torch and encased with rubber. To switch "on," "flash" or "off," you merely rotate the head as indicated.

It is recommended that steel-clad leak-proof batteries be used with the B.M. torch. The price is 35s. By Bardic, Ltd., William Street, Northam, Southampton.

Sew and sew : Whatever you want to sew—children's clothes, curtains, loose covers or repair to household linen—an electric sewing machine is a big advantage in any home.

Pfaff (Britain), Ltd., have now opened sewing centres in Leeds, Middlesborough and London, where sewing classes are given.

This is part of a larger chain of sewing centres throughout the country, where advice on sewing machines may be sought.

ROGER SMITHELLS WILL HELP YOU with your home-making problems. Write to him at "John Bull : Everybody's Weekly," 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope for your reply. Please send a rough drawing or diagram if this will help to make your problem clear.

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in the room with the lights on. John was standing over by the harp. When I came in he said: 'Isobel, did you hear it too? There was nobody here, I swear it! When I came in the room was empty, but the harp strings were still vibrating. I saw them!'—or words to that effect."

Hero asked: "What did Lady Paradine say?"

Isobel replied: "Enid said: 'Mightn't you both have been imagining it all? Couldn't it have been the wind, or something?' "

HERO remained silent for a moment, lost in thought, and then said: "Thank you."

Isobel was now looking at him levelly. She said: "I know that my brother has engaged you to look into this, and I approved his decision. But I think that you ought to know it will do no good, you will not find anything. The nun has been appearing since the time of the third Lord Paradine."

"I would give my right arm to hear the harp play, or to see the nun myself."

Isobel said darkly: "It were better not."

Hero merely nodded and said: "Might I see your room now? I believe it was there the first manifestations took place."

Isobel said: "Of course. Come, I'll take you there."

As they crossed the threshold into her room, Isobel said: "This was once my father's room." And then she asked: "Is there anything you wish to ask me about?"

"About the night of the manifestations."

She said with a kind of resentment: "I was invaded."

"By what?"

"I don't know. The nun perhaps."

"This was the night of . . . ?"

"July the first."

Hero remembered making a note of the date, and quite suddenly knew why. "What happened?" he asked.

Isobel replied: "It seemed as though all the furies had been let loose. A chair moved by itself and one after the other a pair of Sèvres vases were flung from the mantel. An Adam mirror was shattered—and at the same time that tallboy was overturned."

"Were you frightened?"

"Yes, I was terrified," Isobel replied in a low voice. "I knew it was the nun. Sometimes she is invisible, but she was there. She threw my father's picture down. It was an omen!" Isobel was now an ancient prophetess. "There is nothing you or anyone can do!" she cried. "There will be a death in this house. Someone will die!"

"Who, do you think?" said Hero with such matter-of-fact simplicity that it startled Isobel out of her drama.

She said: "I—I don't know, I'm sure—one doesn't."

Hero nodded perfunctorily. "Let's hope this time it may be avoided."

He then went swiftly about the room examining and sounding the walls, looking along them up to the beams of the ceiling. He went and looked out of the window, which opened on to the park and river and, returning, made a note of the configuration of the land.

DURING this time, Isobel had watched wordlessly. Hero said: "Thank you. You have been more than kind and generous with your time." And went out. But half-way through the door he turned and said: "Oh, I'm sorry, I've been meaning to ask, is there a tide-table in the house?"

"Yes," Isobel said, "there's one in the telephone room. We keep it for those who go sailing."

"Thank you," Hero said again and left her, wondering how much of all he had heard was fantasy or imaginings, or out-and-out lies.

And whether Meg would be able to help him sort it out before all hell broke loose in that house again, and someone got hurt.

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NEXT WEEK: Another night of terror—for Susan Marshall

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